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FRAGMENTS

OF

VOYAGES AND TRAVELS.

FRAGMENTS

OF

VOYAGES AND TRAVELS:

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FOR THE USE OF YOUNG PERSONS.

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BY

CAPTAIN BASIL HALL, R.N. F.R.S.

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R P Karkaria

FRAGMENTS

OF

VOYAGES AND TRAVELS.

FIRST SERIES.

ADVERTISEMENT.

As previous editions of these FRAGMENTS have been received with great indulgence by the Public, I have not felt myself at liberty to alter what has already met with so much favour.

In bringing the work, therefore, before a large and important class of the community, in a shape better suited, as I hope, to their wants, I have studiously avoided making any changes, except such as the lapse of time had put out of date.

Portsmouth,
26th May, 1840.

PREFACE.

This little work has been drawn up chiefly for the use of Young Persons; it is therefore hoped, that should it fall under the eye of older readers, the purpose for which it is written will be kept in mind.

On the other hand, should any young person meet with passages he does not perfectly understand, he is recommended not to puzzle over them, but rather to conclude that those parts of the book may be intended for people a little further advanced.

It does not seem a settled point, whether, in the estimation of Juvenile Readers, most interest attaches to a true story, or to one entirely fictitious; but it may be right to mention, that all the incidents here related are real.

The advice which the author has taken the liberty of offering to his Young Friends, as well as the speculations he has occasionally introduced, contain no opinions but such as he considers might have proved useful to himself, at some stage of his own professional life.

Putney Heath,
28th March, 1831.

The author came to Bombay on 12 August 1812

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FRAGMENTS

OF

VOYAGES AND TRAVELS.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY PREDILECTIONS.

VARIOUS circumstances conspired to give me, very early in life, what is called a taste for the sea. In the first place, I came into the world in the midst of a heavy gale of wind; when such was the violence of the storm, and the beating of the rain, that there were some thoughts of removing the whole party to a less rickety corner of the old family mansion, which shook from top to bottom. So strong, indeed, was the impression made on the imagination of those present, by the roaring of the surf close at hand, the whistling of the wind in the drenched forest, and the obvious rocking of the house, under the heavy gusts of that memorable gale, that, as soon as I was old enough to understand any thing at all, the association between the events of my future life, and those of my birth-night, began to be sown in my mind. Thus, long before I shipped a pair of trousers, I felt that a salt-water destiny was to be mine; and as every body encouraged me to cherish these early predilections for the sea, I grew up with something of the same kind of certainty of becoming a sailor, that an elder brother does of becoming a country gentleman, from his knowing, "for quickly comes such knowledge," that the estate is entailed upon him.

The holidays, also, which released me from the irksome confinement of the High School of Edinburgh, were passed in the country, on a part of the rugged sea-coast of Scotland, peculiarly calculated to foster nautical propensities. During the weary months which preceded and followed these six delicious weeks of liberty, my thoughts, instead of being devoted to the comprehension of abstract rules of grammar, which it was our worthy preceptor's sole object in life to drive into us, invariably strayed back to the picturesque and iron-bound shore, as it is happily termed in naval language, along which I was wont to ramble in full enjoyment during the vacation.

So incessantly, indeed, was the contrast presented to my imagination, between the cramped and crabbed routine of school discipline, and the glorious freedom of the open sea-beach, that I took little interest in the games which filled up the play-hours of the other boys. From dwelling constantly upon these thoughts day and night, I became so gloomy and wretched, that the bare recollection of my feelings at that period often makes me shudder, though more than thirty busy, and very happy, years have since passed over my head. The master of our class was, doubtless, a most excellent person; but he would have deemed it a shocking crime against his calling (which he very naturally considered the first on earth) to have allowed the possibility of one boy possessing a particle more of feeling, or more independence of thought, than any other individual of his thousand and one companions. Still less could he understand that any boy should pretend to have aspirations and wild fancies (dreams he called them), the objects of which lay far beyond the boundary walls of the play-ground. Accordingly, I dragged on a tolerably profitless and painful existence for several years; though it is possible that, with a little management, this period might have been rendered not only useful in after life, but happy at the time.

Once only, during my weary continuance in this Limbo, as the Spaniards call the Purgatory of Children, I was addressed in a very kind manner by the head master—a severe personage in his way, as far as regarded the use of the formidable strap, called *taws* in Scotland, which supplies the place of the wholesome birch of the good old English seminaries. Taking me on one side, he said, in a tone so unusually gentle in the despotic government of schools in those days, that it made me start:—

"How comes it, little fellow, that you appear always so gloomy; and that you never play as the rest do, but look for ever as if some misfortune had befallen you?"

I answered, that the confinement of the school was much too great, and that I could not bear being always treated as if I had no feelings or peculiar wishes worthy of separate consideration. That it was not the number of hours' confinement I complained of, but the inconvenient selection of the periods. "Let me, sir," I said, "but choose the times for study, and I will cheerfully work several hours longer. At present, the day is totally cut up and destroyed."

He smiled, patted me on the head, and said the hours and discipline could not be changed, merely to suit the fantastic taste of one boy. I knew this well enough already; in fact, I was not so absurd as to suppose that a public school could be maintained on my visionary principles, or that any rules could be established for their government but such as took account of average abilities, and made allowance for an ordinary share of feeling and patience. Whether or not my quantum of sensibility were needlessly great, is of little consequence: it certainly was so different from that of my companions that it completely prevented my profiting, in the mean time, by the opportunities of this school, and drove me to rest my only prospect of comfort in getting away from its thraldom.

Certain very troublesome misgivings, also, as to the future, came across my juvenile thoughts about this epoch; especially as to the probabilities of happiness in that wide world of freedom for which my soul panted, and of which I knew nothing, except by description. I happened, one unfortunate day, to get hold of Gray's Ode on a distant Prospect of Eton College; a poem fraught, it is true, with images of the highest possible beauty, both of thought and of expression, but the tone of which is more calculated to beget despondency than to inspire hope, by inculcating the stupid and unworthy fallacy, that our school days are happier than those of after-life.

What the "march of intellect" may have done lately to remedy this matter, I cannot say; but in my time, and at the particular seminary alluded to, the season of boyhood was, to me at least, anything but a happy one; and I well remember, after reading the moping poem in question, exclaiming, in a state of bitter despair, "If it is certain that my future life is to be more wretched than this, which is now so full of misery, what, alas, is the rest of my existence likely to be?"

In this terrified frame of mind, I dived into various other works besides those of Gray; but, to my sorrow, very seldom met with any thing of a more consolatory nature. Nor was it till after many years' trial of the wear and tear of actual life, that I came to learn the falsehood of most of these assertions respecting the comparative happiness of school; and to feel assured that the whole, or nearly the whole matter, lies essentially with ourselves. In any situation in life, indeed, the amount of our happiness will probably be found to bear, in the long-run, a pretty exact ratio to the heartiness with which we perform our duty: whereas Gray's Ode, Young's Night Thoughts, and various other sombre productions, too often thrust into the hands of young people, would almost seem to inculcate the notion that the most virtuous persons are the least happy, and that life is necessarily filled with care and remorse, instead of being, as it generally proves, to those who resolve to make it so, a scene of high enjoyment; not, indeed, of unmixed enjoyment, but one in which the pleasures so often outweigh the sorrows. It has, accordingly, always seemed to me a libel on our nature, and a very perverse misapplication of the gifts of Providence, to consider that the earliest days of life must of course be the happiest. It may do very well, in poetical fiction, to talk of childhood being the "sunshine of the breast;" but surely the true broad daylight of life, not poetically, but practically speaking, is to be found at a later period, when the faculties are matured, and the will more free to act.

Be all this, however, as it may, I never lost a minute in hurrying away from school, the instant our annual examinations were ended. At these periodical trials, it may be well supposed, I never cut any great figure. I contented myself, indeed, with trying to keep a little above the middle, partly because some boys sat thereabouts to whom I was attached, and partly because the particular bench alluded to stood near the fire. As soon as the term of imprisonment was over, I flew to the coach-office, and never felt perfectly satisfied that all was right and safe till fairly seated on the top, by the side of my friend the guard, and bowling along the high road. On reaching the country, my first object always was to hunt out some of the fishermen on the shore, who readily engaged to give me a row next morning. After a sleepless night of anticipated delights, I commonly found myself, at sunrise, in a fishing-boat, half a league from the coast, surrounded by congenial spirits, fellows who had no idea of grammar, and who were willing, for a very small bribe, or from motives of professional sympathy, to consider me as somebody, and not to reckon me as a mere zero, serving no other purpose but to augment the numbers of a school, without having any value in myself.

At all events, these hardy boatmen became so much amused with my juvenile enthusiasm about their art, that they took great pleasure in feeding my fancy with tales of nautical dangers and hardships, the joyous excitement of which placed the dull drudgery of syntax in sad contrast. On these expeditions, however, I became always wofully sea-sick; for the boats, or *cobles* as Scotch fishing-boats are called, were not altogether so tidy as a man-of-war's *gig*; besides which, they generally enclosed a due allowance of bilge water, mixed up with decayed remnants of herring-nets, and fragments of forgotten fish. So that my taste for the sea had often such tough work to hold its ground against the deranged action of my nose and stomach, that I must frankly own I often leaped on shore again, to the enjoyment of steady footing and an atmosphere less fishified, with a half-uttered vow at my lips that I would never tempt the ocean more.

This slight infidelity to the beloved element, however, was always very transient, for it seldom lasted longer than the time it cost to climb the high steep bank which guards the east coast of Scotland. From this elevation, the view extends far up the Firth of Forth on one hand, with many a mountain lying beyond it; in front, to the north, stretches the wide German Ocean; while the scene is bounded on the right or eastern side by one of the noblest promontories in the world, called Fast Castle, better known as the Wolf's Crag of the Waverley Novels. To my young fancy this scene appeared, not unnaturally, the grandest of all landscapes; and still, after I have rambled for more than a quarter of a century over the earth's surface, and become acquainted with some of the sublimest works of nature, my opinion of the scenery in question is not changed, otherwise than by increased admiration. Indeed, it will

often require much time, and extensive means of comparison, as well as the assistance of those just conceptions of what is really meant by the great and beautiful in nature which spring from experience alone, before we can fairly estimate the advantages lying at our very door. This will apply, perhaps, to other matters, besides scenery; but it is with that alone I have to do just now; and certainly few things can be imagined more brilliant than the view from that part of the coast. The Firth at the point described, being an immense commercial thoroughfare, is generally studded over with vessels of all sorts and sizes, and I may also add, of all colours. For what the lights and shades of heaven do not perform in this respect, the seamen do for themselves, by tanning their sails, and painting their ships of many different hues. As these vessels drifted past, and dropped one by one out of sight beyond the horizon, I felt the most eager desire to follow their wanderings into those wide seas, about which I had read so often, where the land is lost sight of for months together; where every change of latitude brings fresh stars into view; and every bird and fish, as well as every breath of air, indicates another climate, and almost another world.

In the mean time my real nautical operations were necessarily limited to the undignified navigation of my father's horsepond, upon which, by the assistance of an obliging carpenter lad, I managed to make the first fair trial of that element with which, in after-life, it was my happy lot to become so familiar. Our vessel consisted of two or three rough logs, filched from the farm-yard, and sundry planks, some nailed, and some lashed across them. A mast was readily obtained by the abstraction of a bar from the nearest paling. Considerable difficulty arose as to the sail, for canvas was a material much beyond our finances or influence, till at length my ingenious companion (who, by the way, distinguished himself afterwards as a shipbuilder) suggested the idea of employing one of the mats used by the gardener to protect his plants from the frost. Thus, step by step, our gallant vessel was at length rigged out; and on the second day of our labours, everything being ready, and the wind fair, we started from one end of this inland sea, and, after a prosperous voyage of about ten minutes, by "God's grace"—to use the quaint language still printed in bills of lading—more than by any skill of our own, we reached the other extremity, without any serious disaster.

The pleasure which this primitive voyage inspired has never been much exceeded. It was the first unalloyed happiness I had ever known, and at once opened up a new prospect of hope and resolution, which rendered the weary load of school existence somewhat less intolerable than it had been before. It also gave me a foretaste of the joys of enterprise, and independent command, which, in their turn, called up innumerable visions of successful resource, surmounted difficulties, and all the demi-savage delights of such a life as that of Robinson Crusoe, with the additional advantage of that great adventurer's example.

Little did I then think—and, in fact, it was nearly impossible I should reasonably think—that the realities of life could ever come up to these imaginary conceptions. And yet I have lived to experience that, sanguine as I then was, the anticipation fell much short of the glorious reality which I met with almost everywhere. Indeed, I can declare with perfect truth, that in all my voyages and travels I have generally found things more curious and more interesting, in all respects, than I had previously looked for; or if the career of gratified curiosity has at any time been checked, it has only been followed by a more ardent pursuit, crowned ultimately by still higher rewards.

This process of feeding the curiosity was well enough exemplified by a series of very exciting, though often painful and seemingly discouraging, incidents that occurred every year on the coast already mentioned, where I passed the holidays. Ten leagues, or thirty geographical miles, due north of our ancient castle of Dunglass (once the head-quarters of Oliver Cromwell's army), lies the Bell Rock, just off the mouth of the Tay, and close to the northern side of the great estuary called the Firth of Forth. Up to the commencement of the present century, this rock was justly considered one of the most formidable dangers that the navigators of those seas had to encounter. Its head, merged under the surface during greater part of the tide, at no time made much show above water. There was nothing for it, therefore, but to keep well clear of the mischief, or, as seamen express themselves, to give the rock a wide berth. Ships, accordingly, bound for the Forth, in their constant terror of this ugly reef, not content with giving it ten or even twenty miles of elbow-room, must needs edge off a little more to the south, so as to hug the southern shore in such a way that, when the wind chopped round to the northward, as it often did, these overcautious navigators became embayed in a deep bight or bay to the westward of Fast Castle. If the breeze freshened before they had time to work out, they paid dearly for their apprehensions of the Bell Rock, by driving upon ledges fully as sharp, and far more extensive and inevitable. The consequence was, that from three to four vessels, and sometimes half-a-dozen, used to be wrecked each winter, within a mile or two of our very door.

Perhaps there are few more exciting spectacles than a vessel stranded on a lee-shore, and especially such a shore, which is fringed with reefs extending far out, and offering no spot for shelter. The hapless ship lies dismasted, bilged, and beat about by the waves, with her despairing crew clinging to the wreck, or to the shrouds, and uttering cries totally inaudible in the roar of the sea; while at each successive dash of the breakers the number of the survivors is thinned, till, at length they all disappear! The gallant bark then goes to pieces, and the coast, for a league on either side, is strewed with broken planks, masts, boxes, and ruined portions of the goodly cargo, with which, a few hours before, she was securely freighted, and dancing merrily over the waters.

But it is the greatest of all mistakes to suppose that the actual contemplation of such disasters, still less the description of hardships, has any tendency to divert a young mind from following its original bent, towards a profession of such varied and high excitement as that of the sea. At all events, the effect of each succeeding shipwreck I witnessed was only to stimulate me more and more

to pursue the sole object of all my thoughts, waking or dreaming.

I can recollect, it is true, being conscious of a feeling of awe, approaching at times to dread, as I saw the waves curling over these devoted vessels, which, as the tide advanced, they were gradually tearing to pieces. But still there was always more of confidence and pleasure than of alarm in the prospect which my mind's eye conjured up to itself beyond these stirring adventures. To this day there is told a traditional story amongst our fishermen, of my having once contributed to save a ship's crew, by engaging some country people to transport a boat from a distance, across the edge of Lammermoor, in a cart. The account further sets forth, that I had only a few halfpence in my pocket; and that when these proved insufficient to induce the driver of the vehicle to go out of his way, I stoutly asserted I had authority from my father to offer a guinea for any such assistance. Upon this pledge, it appears, the cart was freighted with its unwonted cargo, and the boat reached the spot in good time. I have no recollection whatsoever of this incident; but something of the kind may possibly have occurred, or, more probably, may have been merely talked of amongst the fishermen, my great patrons and admirers. At all events, these sayings and doings, by making me feel not so utterly useless in the world as I was made to appear at school, may have united me by still stronger ties to the animating profession for which I was brought up, apparently as a matter of course.

Future generations of the Dunglass family, however, will not have this costly and melancholy source of encouragement for their children to go to sea; the shipwrecks which so paradoxically helped to do me this good turn, being now, fortunately for commerce and humanity, hardly ever known at that part of the coast. The fatal Bell Rock, the direct and indirect cause of so many losses, has recently been converted into one of the greatest sources of security that navigation is capable of receiving. By means of scientific skill, aided by well-managed perseverance, with the example of the Eddystone to copy from, a light-house, one hundred and twenty feet high, has been raised upon this formidable reef by my friend, Mr. Robert Stevenson, the skilful engineer of the Northern Lights. So that the mariner, instead of doing all he can to avoid the spot once so much dreaded, now eagerly runs for it, and counts himself happy when he gets sight of the revolving star on the top, which, from its being variously coloured, he can distinguish from every other light in that quarter. He is then enabled to steer directly for his port in perfect security, though the night be ever so dark.

On returning from these scenes of real life and activity, to that most picturesque of cities, the Old Town of Edinburgh, I was plunged into tenfold gloom; and really do not know what I should have done had I not lighted accidentally upon Shakspeare's description of the ship-boy reposing on the high and giddy mast. This idea, so congenial to the fancy of the sailor elect, and withal so exquisitely poetical, so wrought on my fancy, that I could not rest till possessed of a copy of the whole of his plays, which I forthwith read over from beginning to end—to the total destruction, I am half ashamed to say, of all the little respect I then had for the ancient classics. The Tempest was soon learned almost by heart, in particular the nautical part of it; and I swore an eternal friendship with the boatswain, whose seamanship, by the way, though wild and strange, is, upon the whole, wonderfully correct. One would like to know how and where Shakspeare picked up his technical knowledge!

About this period, also, when my thoughts presented a strange jumble of real and imaginary shipwrecks, mixed up with the intricate niceties of Latin grammar, I met my father one day in the streets, close to the great Lord Duncan's house.

"Well met!" he cried; "come along, master sailor, and you shall see the hero of Camperdown."

I was accordingly introduced as a future brother-seaman to this distinguished officer, whose noble appearance was in such good keeping with his renown, that I felt my respect for him rise at every moment of the interview.

"You are a youngster of some taste," observed his lordship good-naturedly, on hearing that I liked the sea; "and if you will come this way I can show you something to encourage you to stick to your business."

So saying, the Admiral led me to another room, where a flag he took from Admiral de Winter, on the 11th of October, 1797, was hanging up. Although, however, this sight, in such company, was well calculated to make an impression, I remember being still more enchanted with the frankness and kindliness of the veteran's manner. I could not help saying to myself, that if such a man saw reason to treat a boy with attention, I was surely entitled to something less disrespectful than I met with daily at school; and next morning I shed a torrent of bitter tears as I entered the scene of my imprisonment, and contrasted the gruff reception of the master with the manly cordiality of the great and good old Admiral.

Not long afterwards, I happened to meet Professor John Playfair, of Edinburgh College, at a house in the country. It was the singular fortune of this amiable and accomplished philosopher, to be equally a favourite with the young and with the old. He won the regard and the confidence of children not only by the matchless sweetness of his disposition, but by the generous encouragement he delighted to give to their opening thoughts; whilst among men of science or of letters he was not more admired for the extent, depth, and variety of his scientific and literary attainments, than for the eloquent facility which he possessed of giving popular expression to the most abstruse branches of knowledge.

I found him one morning seated on the ground, taking the sun's altitude with a pocket sextant, from an artificial horizon made by pouring some treacle into a bowl. Upon my expressing great curiosity to know what magical operation he could be about, he at once explained, or rather endeavoured to explain, that he wished to know the exact time of day, that he might set his watch. Instead of cutting me short with some idle reply about the thing being above my comprehension, he intermitted his work, and sought earnestly to make me perceive how closely such observations were connected with the duties of a naval life. Next day he gave me a copy of Bonnycastle's Astronomy, which I possess to this hour; and I think I may date from the conversation above alluded to the

growth of a taste for that branch of professional pursuits called nautical astronomy, which has not only proved at all times a source of the highest enjoyment, but, as may be seen in the sequel, was of great use in helping me on in the world.

I shall be sorry if what I have here said dispose any idle youth who may not find himself happy at school to try so rugged a profession as that of the sea, unless he have many other and more substantial reasons for giving it the preference. Indeed, the whole system of school discipline has, I understand, been so much changed since the present century commenced, that boys have probably much less excuse than I had for not sticking to their lessons. After all, however, truth forces me to confess, that the fault lay fully more with the scholar than with the school—with the pupil than with the pedagogue; for, verily, my head had got so filled with notions of voyaging and travelling, that, even if I had been at Eton, or at Harrow, I dare say I should have sighed to flee away.

It is clear enough, that no boy, instruct him as we will, can form correct ideas of what he is likely to meet with in any profession; still, if his mind be ardently bent upon one particular pursuit, and his parents decide upon indulging this fancy, he will be bound in honour, if he have the spirit of a gentleman within him, to persevere in following up the line he has been allowed to choose for himself. The incipient difficulties and discomforts of all professions are probably pretty much alike; and the boy who has not energy enough to set his face resolutely against the early discouragements of any one particular calling will, in all probability, be successful in no other. It is always, however, so great an advantage to secure a young person's own feelings, and to engage his point of honour heartily in the cause in which he has embarked, that, if circumstances render it at all expedient, or not quite unreasonable, the choice of a profession may often be conceded to him with great advantage. But such free choice ought always to be burdened with a positive interdict against subsequent change. In the case of a sea life, this condition appears to be quite indispensable; for the contrast is generally so striking between the comforts of home and the discomforts of a ship, to say nothing of the rough fare, hard work, sea-sickness, and strict discipline afloat, that, if an opening be constantly presented for escape, many youngsters will not have resolution enough to bear up against those trials to which they must of necessity be exposed, and which they ought to hold themselves prepared to meet and overcome with cheerfulness.

Perhaps the naval profession owes a good deal of its peculiar character to these very disadvantages, as they are called; and though we may often regret to see young men, of good abilities, dropping out of the navy, who, if they had only cast on the right tack, might have done the service and themselves much honour, yet there is no denying that their more vigorous-minded and sterner-framed companions, whom they leave afloat, are, upon the whole, better fitted to make useful public servants.

In many other professions, it is possible to calculate, beforehand, with more or less precision, the degree and kind of work which a young man is likely to be called upon to perform; but there is peculiar difficulty in coming to any just conclusion upon these points, even in a vague way, in the life of a sailor. His range of duties includes the whole world; he may be lost in the wilderness of a three-decker, or be wedged into a cock-boat of a cutter; he may be half fried in Jamaica, or wholly frozen in Spitzbergen; he may be cruising during six days of the week in the midst of a fleet of a hundred sail, and flounder in solitude on the seventh; he may be peaceably riding at anchor in the morning, and in hot action before sunset. He may waste his years in idleness, the most fatal contingency of all to subordination; or he may be worn out by sheer fatigue. If employed on the home station, he may hear from his friends every day; or if serving abroad he may be fifteen months, (as I have been) at a time, without receiving a single letter or a newspaper. He may serve under a soft or easy-going commander, which is a great evil; or be ground down by one of those tight hands, who, to use the slang of the cockpit, keep every one on board "under the fear of the Lord and a broomstick." In short, a man may go to sea for twenty years, and find no two commanding-officers, and hardly two days, alike. Allt his, which is delightful to some minds, and productive in them of every kind of resource, is utterly distracting, and often ruinous, to others. Weak frames generally sink under its severity, while weak minds become confused with its complication, and the intensity of its action. On the other hand, the variety of objects in a sea life is so boundless, that if a young man have only strength of body to endure the wear and tear of watching and other inevitable fatigues; and have also strength of character enough to persevere, in the certainty of openings occurring, sooner or later, by which his talents or his industry may find profitable employment, there can be little doubt that the profession of a sailor, to a person who is suited to it, is one of the most delightful in the world.

Supposing that this ticklish question, of the choice of a profession, has been conceded to a boy, there remains the still more perplexing problem, what is the fittest method of training him beforehand, so that he may enter his new life with best effect? The difficulty arises, I suspect, from two causes, one of which applies to education generally, the other to the particular case of a lad intended for the navy. Most people seem to think, and very naturally, that the object of a school is to teach knowledge which shall afterwards become practically available in the business of life; and they cannot well understand what is the use of teaching sailors to read Latin and Greek, which appear to be so little applicable to their real work. Much of this difficulty vanishes, however, if it be considered that the chief purpose of education is to discipline the mind, and to train up the character, so that it may be found equal to any task, no matter how unlooked-for. In such a view, the Classics are as good, and probably a better exercise for the mind than any other.

If the principles, the faculties, and the feelings of a boy be duly cultivated at school, he may be expected to enter the world in as fit a state to profit by the opportunities in his path as his nature will allow of; nor does it much matter, perhaps, by what artificial machinery this degree of perfection in mental culture has been attained. All that seems of essential importance is, that the

endowments given him by nature should be so well exercised in youth, that when brought to bear on the real, manly business of life, they may act with effect. If the process of education has been well managed, its utility will probably be as sensibly felt, in cases where the pursuits to be followed in earnest are dissimilar, as where they are similar to those, by means of which the boy's faculties are developed at school.

In the instance of young men intended for the navy, I think this rule applies with particular force. The early age of thirteen, at which they must of necessity go on board ship, renders it almost impossible to acquire any great stock of what is usually called knowledge. Some share of true wisdom, indeed, they may have gained; and, by proper management, they may also have secured a considerable stock of that particular description of information which will be of most use to them in the outset of life. Their growing minds, for example, may have been fitted, by a judicious system of school discipline, to submit with cheerfulness, as well as advantage, to that singular mixture of constraint and freedom, which forms the most striking feature of a sea-life. If this be true, it is perhaps of no great consequence whether the ground-work of such an education be the ancient classics, the mathematics, or modern languages: for the real object, viz. mental training, may, by proper management, be equally well attained by one as by another of these methods.

No two boys, perhaps, out of a dozen, intended for the sea, may require exactly the same kind of training; but still there appears no reason why the whole number should not be equally well fitted, by previous education, to advance themselves in the service, according to their respective talents, though some of them, at starting, may be altogether ignorant of those subjects supposed to be of the most indispensable utility at sea.

Antecedent, therefore, to the age of thirteen, after which a boy ought never to commence his naval career, it appears to matter vastly little what he learns, provided his mind be kept fully occupied. It will be better, no doubt, if a boy's taste happen to lie in that direction, that his occupations at school shall have as direct a reference as possible to his future pursuits. If, for instance, he have a turn for mathematics, or for modern languages, he ought certainly to be indulged in his fancy. But the essential objects to be attended to, at this stage of his education, lie a great deal further from the surface, and consequently make much less show. The formation of character, upon the solid basis of religious principle and religious sentiment, and a due cultivation of manners, especially of those branches which relate to truth, temper, and self-denial, are quite within the range of education antecedent to the age of thirteen. If, then, a boy, intended for the sea, be only well grounded in his principles; and if he be taught to think, feel, and act like a gentleman, before he is turned adrift on the wide ocean; and if he shall also have acquired habits of industry and docility, together with the ordinary elements of knowledge (reading, writing, and so on), it will matter very little, as I conceive, whether he has acquired much detailed information besides; all that is wanting will follow in good time.

The consideration of what system of instruction should be pursued afterwards, either at the Royal Naval College at Portsmouth, or on board ship, is a totally different affair, and deserves to be treated by itself.*

CHAPTER II.

FIRST GOING AFLOAT.

I KNOW not what other persons may have felt on these occasions; but I must own, that, in spite of all my enthusiasm, when the actual time came for fairly leaving friends and home, and plunging alone and irrevocably into a new life, I felt a degree of anxiety and distrust of myself, which, as these feelings were quite strange, I scarcely knew how to manage. I had been allowed to choose my own profession, it is true, and was always eager to be off; yet I could almost have wished, when the decisive moment arrived, that I had not been taken at my word. For the first time in my life, I knew what was meant by the word responsibility, and all the shame of possible failure stared me in the face. When at school, nine-tenths of my thoughts had generally rambled far abroad to those unknown regions, upon which my imagination loved to feast, day and night. I can also well remember that my heart sunk within me, and I felt pretty much as if I were on the verge of death, when the carriage that was to convey me away drove up to the door. I still believed that, even on this earth, there was a new and a much better world ahead; but when the judgment was tasked, to say upon what grounds this belief rested, the answer was so meagre, that I began to dread I had done a mighty foolish thing in setting out to seek for it.

"What a scrape I shall be in," I said to myself, "if the discouraging representations of those gloomy fellows the poets be true pictures of life! What if this sad existence prove only a scene of gradually increasing misery? How shall I be able to get on at all, if a sea life be not more enjoyable than that of the High School of Edinburgh; and what kind of figure shall I make in life, if driven back, by sheer distress, to petition my father to take me home again, to eat the bitter bread of idleness, or to seek about for some other profession, of which all the rubs and tugs may prove just as bad, or worse than those of the sea, and possibly not very much better than those of school?"

I took as much care as I could, however, to let none of these unworthy doubts and alarms find expression in word or in look; but with a heart almost bursting, I took leave of the holiday scenes of the country I had loved so well, and which, to my young fancy, then appeared the most beautiful spot on earth. This judgment, as I before observed, a tolerably extensive acquaintance with other regions of the globe has only tended to confirm. Of course, I had a regular interview and leave-taking with my capital friends the fishermen, whom I had long held to be the best informed persons of my acquaintance, merely because they knew most about ropes and ship matters generally. I cannot say that these worthy mariners stood the test of after-communication quite

* In the United Service Journals, for June and August 1839, I have treated at length of the education of naval officers, both before and after going to sea.

so well as the romantic coast scenery near which they resided. I remember, on returning from my first voyage, going down to the beach, in my uniform jacket, and in no very modest spirit, to show off my superior nautical attainments to these poor fellows, who had been sticking fast to their rocks during the interval, much after the fashion of their own shell-fish. Their reception, of course, was highly flattering; but their confined views of the profession, and scanty knowledge of many of its details, made me look back with wonder to the time when I had hailed them as first-rate masters in the noble art of seamanship.

On the 16th of May, 1802, I left home; and next day my father said to me, "Now you are fairly afloat in the world, you must begin to write a journal;" and, suiting the action to the word, he put a blank book into one hand, and a pen into the other, with a hint for me to proceed at once to business. The following is a fair specimen of the result, which I certainly little imagined was ever destined to attain the honour of being printed:—

"*May* 17.—Journey to London.—Left Dunglass. Breakfasted at the Press Inn, and changed horses. Got to Belford; changed horses. Alnwick—dined there, and got to Morpeth, where we slept. Up early; breakfasted at Newcastle. Stopped at Durham. Walked forward till the chaise should overtake us; got into the chaise. Stopped to give the horses some drink. Saw two deep draw-wells. Observed some coal-carts at Newcastle coal-pits. The wheels are so constructed, that they run downhill upon things in the road, which are made for the purpose. The horse follows the cart, to draw it up the hill, after it has emptied the load."

The rest of the journal is pretty much in the same style, containing a dry record of insignificant facts, leading to nothing, useless as memorandums at the time, and of course not more useful at the distance of eight-and-twenty years. I would give a good deal, at this moment, to possess, instead of these trashy notices, some traces, no matter how faint, of what was actually passing in my mind upon the occasion of this journey. The resolutions we make at such a period, together with the doubts and fears which distract us, may have a certain amount of value, if then jotted down in good faith; but if these fleeting thoughts be once allowed to pass without record, they necessarily lose most of their force. There is always, indeed, something interesting, and often much that is useful, in tracing the connexion between sentiment and action, especially in the elementary stages of life, when the foundations of character are laid. But the capacity of drawing such inferences belongs to a very different period of our career; and hence it arises, that early journals are generally so flat and profitless, if they be not written in a spirit which few people think of till too late.

I shall have so many better opportunities than the present of speaking on the copious subject of journal-writing, that I shall merely remark, in passing, for the consideration of my young readers, that what most people wish to find recorded in a diary, is not so much a mere log-book statement of facts, however important these may be, as some account of the writer's opinions and his feelings upon the occasion. These, it may be observed, are like the lights and shades and colours of a painting, which, while they contribute fully as much to the accuracy of a representation as the correctness of the mere outline, impress the mind of the spectator with a still more vivid image of the object intended to be described.

I ought to have mentioned before, that the purpose of this journey was to ship me off to sea; and it was arranged that I should join the flag-ship of Sir Andrew Mitchell, then fitting in the river for the Halifax station. We, of course, set out for London, as the grand focus from which everything in the English world radiates. But I find nothing in the memorandums of that period worthy of being extracted, nor do I recollect any incident which excited me strongly, except the operation of rigging myself out for the first time in midshipman's uniform. There was something uncommonly pleasing, I remember, in the glitter of the dirk and its apparatus; and also in the smart air as well as new cut of the dress; but the chief satisfaction arose from the direct evidence this change of garb afforded that there was no joke in the matter, but that the real business of life was actually about to begin. Accordingly, in a tolerable flutter of spirits, I made my first appearance on the deck of one of His Majesty's ships. My journal of that day contains the following record of events:—

"Went to Deptford after breakfast in a hackney-coach: when we got there, we got out of the coach, walked down the street, and met the captain of the Leander. Went with him to the clerk of the cheque's office, and had my name put in some book or other. Went with him to his lodgings, where he gave us a list of some things I was to get. Got a boat and went on board the Leander for the first time. Came home on a stage-coach—got a boat at London bridge—went up in it to the Adelphi—got out and went to the hotel."

In most other professions, the transition from the old to the new mode of life is more or less gradual; but in that of the sea, it is so totally abrupt, and without intervening preparation, that a boy must be either very much of a philosopher or very much of a goose, not to feel, at first, well-nigh overwhelmed with the change of circumstances. The luxuries and the kindnesses of home are suddenly exchanged for the coarse fare of a ship, and the rough intercourse of total strangers. The solicitude with which he has been watched heretofore, let the domestic discipline have been ever so strict, is tenderness itself, compared to the utter indifference, approaching to dislike, with which a youngster, or "squeaker," as he is appropriately called, is received on board. Even if he possess any acquaintances amongst his own class, they have few consolations in their power; and, generally speaking, are rather disposed to laugh at the home-sick melancholy of a new-comer, than to cheer him up, when his little heart is almost breaking.

It so happened that I knew no one on board the ship, excepting two middies similarly circumstanced with myself. I was introduced, indeed, to a very gruff, elderly, service-soured master's mate, to whose care, much against his own wishes, I had been consigned by a mutual friend, a captain with whom he had formerly served. Our own excellent commanding-officer had a thousand other things to look after, far more pressing than the

griefs and cares of a dozen of boys under his charge.

I felt at first bewildered and subdued by the utter solitude of my situation, as my father shook me by the hand, and quitted the ship. I recollect also the feeling of despair when I looked round me, and became conscious of my utter insignificance. "Shall I ever be able," thought I, "to fill any respectable part in this vast scene? What am I to do? How shall I begin? Whom can I consult?" I could furnish no satisfactory answer to any of these queries; and though I had not the least idea of shrinking from what I had undertaken, yet, I confess, I was not far from repenting that I had been so decided about the matter.

There is a vehement delight, no doubt, in novelty; but we may have too much of it at once; and certainly, if my advice were asked as to this point, in the case of another, I should recommend that a boy be gradually introduced to his future home; and, if possible, placed under the auspices of some one older than himself, and who, from having a real interest in him, might soften the needless rigours of this formidable change. I had no such preparation; and was without a friend or even an acquaintance on board, who cared a single straw for me. I was also very little for my age, spoke broad Scotch, and was, withal, rather testy in my disposition. The cockpit, it is true, is a pretty good place to work the bad humours out of a crotchety young fellow, and to bring him to his due bearings; but I think I have seen a good many tenderer plants than I was crushed down under the severity of this merciless discipline. Perhaps it is all for the best; because youngsters who cannot or will not stand this rough rubbing are just as well out of the way, both for themselves and the public.

There is one practice, however, which, as I invariably followed it myself, I know to be in every boy's power, and I venture strongly to recommend it to others in the same situation; nor is it very likely that many will be exposed to greater trials, in a small way, than I was at first. The maxim is, always, in our correspondence, to put the best face upon matters, and never, if possible, to betray any inevitable unhappiness. Such a practice is doubly useful, for it contributes essentially to produce that character of cheerfulness in reality, which is partly assumed at the moment of writing, in order to save our friends from distress on our account. It would be wrong, indeed, to say in our letters, that we are very happy, when in truth we are very much the reverse; but without stating any falsehood, or giving in to any subterfuge (which is generally worse), those particular things may very fairly be dwelt upon which are agreeable almost to the exclusion of those which are otherwise. We should learn, in short, to see and to describe the cheerful things; and, both in our practice and in description, leave the unpleasant ones to take care of themselves.

For example, I remember, as well as if the incidents had occurred yesterday, most of the details which are stated in the following letter, written the very day after I was left to my fate, amongst absolute strangers, in the unknown world of a man-of-war. I certainly was far from happy, and might easily have made my friends wretched by selecting chiefly what was disagreeable. I took a different course.

"H. M. Ship Leander, June 12, 1802.
Cock-pit.

"Dear Father,

"After you left us, I went down into the mess-room; it is a place about twenty feet long, with a table in the middle of it, and wooden seats upon which we sit. When I came down, there were a great many cups and saucers upon the table. A man came in, and poured hot water into the tea-pot. There are about fourteen of us mess at the same time. We were very merry in this dark hole, where we had only two candles.

"We come down here, and sit when we like; and at other times go upon deck. At about ten o'clock we had supper upon bread and cheese, and a kind of pudding which we liked very much. Some time after this I went to a hammock, which was not my own, as mine was not ready, there not being enough of clues at it, but I will have it to-night. I got in at last. It was very queer to find myself swinging about in this uncouth manner, for there was only about a foot of space between my face and the roof; so, of course, I broke my head a great many times on the different posts in the cockpit, where all the midshipmen sleep. After having got in, you may be sure I did not sleep very well, when all the people were making such a noise going to bed in the dark, and the ship in such confusion. I fell asleep at last, but was always disturbed by the quarter-master coming down to awake the midshipmen who were to be on guard during the night. He comes up to their bed-sides and calls them; so I, not being accustomed to it, was always awaked too. I had some sleep, however, but, early in the morning, was again roused up by the men beginning to work.

"There is a large hole which comes down from the decks, all the way through to the hold, where they let down the casks. The foot of the hammock that I slept in was just at the hole, so I saw the casks all coming down close by me. I got up at half-past-seven, and went into the berth (our mess-room), and we were all waiting for breakfast till eight, when the man who serves and brings in the dishes for the mess came down in a terrible passion, saying, that as he was boiling the kettle at the stove, the master-at-arms had thrown water upon the fire and put it out. All this was because the powder was coming on board. So we had to want our breakfast for once. But we had a piece of bread and butter; and as we were eating it, the master-at-arms came down, and said that our candles were to be taken away; so we had to eat our dry meal in the dark.

"I then went upon deck, and walked about, looking at the Indiamen coming up the river, till eleven, when I and one of my companions went and asked the lieutenant if he would let us go on shore in the jolly-boat, as it was going at any rate. We intended to take a walk in some of the fields. We got leave, and some more of the midshipmen went with us. There are about six men row the boat, and we sit any where we like. Got on shore, and ran about the park you were mentioning when in the boat. Then came back to an inn, where we had some rolls and butter and coffee, to make up for the loss of our breakfast in the morning. We then took a walk to the

church at Dartford, where we lounged about till we were tired, then came back through the fields to the boat, which we got into, and made the ship."

Professional eyes will detect a curious mixture of ignorance and knowledge in the above production, in which, if the nautical terms, such as "hole" for hatchway, be not too severely criticised, the information may pass pretty well for twenty-four hours' experience.

In a letter written a few days afterwards, from the Nore, I find some touches of the same kind.

"On Sunday, about three o'clock in the morning, I was awakened by a great noise of the boatswain's mates and the captain bawling for all hands up to unfurl the sails. As I thought I could not sleep much more, I got up in the dark and went upon deck. All the men were hauling the anchor in: they were a good while about it. As soon as the anchor was got in, all the men ran up the masts like so many cats, and went out on the yard-arms and untied the sails. In a little while all the sails were set, and we scudded down the river, very quick. Got to the Nore about twelve o'clock, where we now lie for three or four days."

In another letter, of the same date, after giving an account of the "confounded noise made by the men, and the boatswain's mates, ordering the anchor to be drawn up," and describing, more correctly than in the above extract, that the sailors "ran up the shrouds," I proceed to plume myself, rather prematurely, upon being already a voyager.

"About twelve o'clock we made the Nore—the first time I have been in open sea!" I half suspect that the motion of the ship, which, even at that stage of our progress, began to overturn the serenity of my stomach, may have led me to conclude we were at sea. In the same epistle, in spite of the open ocean, there occur the following sentences:—

"I like my station very much indeed. Have some very agreeable messmates, and the schoolmaster is a very pleasant man, who has travelled a great deal. We have not begun our school yet, as we are all in confusion, but shall as soon as we have tripped our anchor for Halifax."

The next letter was written from Spithead, and is characteristic enough.

"*H. M. S. Leander, Spithead, June* 18.

"I am much better pleased with my situation than I suspected I would at my first coming on board. We have in our mess four Scotchmen, six Englishmen, and two Irish, so that we make a very pleasant company down in the cockpit. We dine at twelve, and breakfast at eight in the morning. At breakfast we get tea and sea cake: at dinner we have either beef, pork, or pudding. But when we come into a harbour or near one, there are always numbers of boats come out with all sorts of vegetables and fresh meat, which are not left long in the boat, for the people all run, and buy up the soft bread and fresh provisions.

"About nine o'clock on the 17th, we anchored in the Downs—the famous Downs—but, instead of seeing a large fleet of great ships thundering out a salute to us on our entrance, there was not one but a Dane and a Swede; so we had to moor ship in the now solitary Downs. All the hills along the coast are chalk. I should have liked to have gone on shore at Dover to get you a piece of the rock, but could not, as the ship was sailing as we passed it.

"We saw the coast of France, but were not near enough to see any thing that was going on in the French territories.

"We midshipmen are upon watch every night for four hours together; we do nothing but walk the quarter-deck, if the ship is not sailing. There is always half the crew upon deck when the ship is sailing, and we and the lieutenants order them to do so and so about the ropes and sails. All the men's hammocks are brought upon deck, and laid in places at the side for the purpose, both to give room for the men to work under the decks, and to give them air. All the decks are washed and well scrubbed every morning, which is very right, as they are often dirtied.

"There is a sort of cylinder of sail-cloth, about two feet in diameter, which is hung above the deck, and is continued down through the decks to the cockpit. The wind gets in at the top, and so runs down and airs the cock-pit, which is a very pleasant thing, down here, at the bottom of the ship.

"This morning about eight o'clock, we arrived at Spithead, and saw the celebrated Portsmouth, but I did not go ashore the first day, as so many others were going; but I intend to go as soon as I get leave. As we were coming along we saw the Isle of Wight; it is very pretty indeed, viewed from the ship, whatever it might be were we on it. I saw some pretty places there with plenty of wood round them. The sun was fast setting on the water in the opposite horizon, which had a fine effect, and cast a light upon the island, which I cannot describe to you, as it is such a rich country, and contains so many objects—it is too pretty to describe. There are some ships at Spithead, both large and small. In my next letter, if I go to Portsmouth I will give you an account of all the harbour and docks, &c. &c. We remain here for ten days, I believe."

These extracts, though of course sufficiently boyish, help to show what may be made out of the most common-place details, when all things are totally new both to the writer and the reader. It is on this account I give a place to these juvenile lucubrations; for, I may repeat, it is seldom the particular incidents we care about in such cases, so much as the state of feeling and genuine opinions of a young person, exposed for the first time to the actual contact of the world. It would be unreasonable to expect such ideas to be expressed in so many words; but they may be picked up, in some degree, by the very terms used in describing the most ordinary transactions.

The following letter shows how little difficulty people find in expressing themselves when well charged with their topic. On reading it over at the distance of nearly thirty years, I cannot help remarking how different, and yet how much alike, the same person may be at various periods of his life; how much changed in thought, in sentiment, in action! It is curious also to discover how independent the man at one stage of life is of the same man at another stage, though after all, they may possibly be more nearly allied in character, at the bottom, than any two other persons

who could be placed in comparison. At the same time, under the circumstances described in this letter, I really do not see that I should act differently at this hour.

"*Portsmouth, June* 19.

"We were very near all being destroyed, and blown up, last night, by an alarming fire on board. As I was standing making my hammock, last night about ten o'clock, near two others making theirs, we were alarmed by seeing a large burst of sparks come from one corner of the cock-pit. Without going to see what was the matter, I ran into our berth, or place where we mess, and got hold of all the pots of beer which the midshipmen were going to drink. I returned with these, and threw them on the fire, while others ran for water.

"When I came back, I saw the purser's steward covered with fire, and rubbing it off him as fast as he could, with a pile of burning sheets and blankets lying at his feet. One of us ran up to the quarter-deck, and seizing the fire-buckets that were nearest, filled them and brought them down. We also got some of the men out of their hammocks, but took good care not to awaken any of the rest, for fear of bustle and confusion.

"The sentry, as soon as he discovered the smell, went down to the captain and lieutenants, who immediately came to the cock-pit, and whispered out 'Silence!' They then got more buckets of water, and quenched the flames, which, as they thought, were only in the purser's steward's cabin. But one of the men opened the door of the steward's store-room, and saw a great deal of fire lying on the floor. Water, of course, was applied, and it also was quenched; the store-room was then well flooded.

"The captain ordered the purser's steward to be put in irons directly, as well as his boy, who had stuck the light up in the cabin. The captain next went with the master-at-arms into the powder magazine, which was close to the purser's steward's cabin, and found the bulkhead or partition half-burnt through by the fire in the cabin!

"All this mischief was occasioned by sticking a naked light upon the beam above the cabin, from whence it had fallen down and set fire to the sheets. The steward in trying to smother it with more, had set fire to the whole bundle, which he then flung in a mass into the store-room. There was a watch kept all night near the spot. Nobody has been hurt.

"I am very sorry for the purser's steward, for he was a very good-natured and obliging man, and much liked by all of us. He gave us plums, &c. when we asked them from him. He is broke, I fear. I will give you the issue in my next letter."

This incident served, in a small way, to bring me into notice; for the very next day, to my great satisfaction, I was ordered by the first lieutenant to go in the jolly-boat, which was manned alongside, with some message to a ship that he named, lying near us at Spithead. I hesitated; and upon his asking me why I did not "be off," I replied that I did not know which was the ship in question. "Oh," said he, looking over the gangway hammocks, "that ship with the top-gallant-masts struck."

Now, I had not the remotest idea what the term "top-gallant-mast-struck" might mean; but as the officer seemed impatient, I hurried down the side. The bow-man shoved the boat off, and away we rowed, making a very zig-zag course; for, though I had the tiller in my hand, I knew very imperfectly how to use it. The strokesman of the boat at last laid his oar across, touched his hat, and said, "Which ship are we going to, sir?"

I answered in the words of the first lieutenant, "The one with the top-gallant-masts struck."

"Oh, sir," exclaimed the fellow, smiling, "we have passed her some time: there she lies," pointing astern.

Round we pulled, and I was much inclined to ask the man to steer the boat; for, although my old associates, the fishermen on the coast of Scotland, had edified me a little on this matter, I found it quite a different affair to take a boat along-side a man-of-war at Spithead, in a tide's way, from what it had been to run a Scotch coble on the beach. Accordingly, I first ran the jolly-boat stem on, and in trying to remedy this lubberly blunder, gave orders that had the effect of bringing the boat head and stern; which is about as wrong in seamanship, as it would be in a horseman to put his right foot into the stirrup in mounting, which, of course, would bring him with his face to the tail.

Nevertheless, I crawled up the side, gave my message, and returned to report the answer. The only salutation I received from the first lieutenant was in the following words, uttered in a sharp, angry tone:

"Where the deuce have you been, youngster, all this time? and what possessed you to go cruising about amongst the whole fleet at such a rate?"

"I hope I shall learn to do better, sir," I stammered out.

"There is much room for improvement, I am sure," he cried.

I was made painfully sensible, by the tartness of this reproach, that there was no very extraordinary degree of professional sagacity in what I had recently done about the fire near the magazine. I had been taking some credit to myself for not bawling out "fire! fire!" and especially for having thought of the pots of beer; but this brilliant piece of service seemed now all forgotten!

Officers, and other persons in authority, should be careful how they strike young folks with their tongues; for although the wounds made do not show upon the skin like those caused by steel or lead, they often sink deeper into the feelings, and frequently remain rankling there much longer than was intended, or than is useful.

Of course I was excessively mortified; but the justice of the officer's censure was so obvious, and the ridicule of the seamen in the boat, even subdued as it was, so fair, that I soon saw I had nothing to do but to set about learning to steer forthwith, and to lose no time in finding out what "striking top-gallant masts" could possibly mean.

CHAPTER III.

SPECIMEN OF COCKPIT DISCIPLINE.

I SKIP over many other anecdotes at Portsmouth, in order to get fairly out to sea; for I never felt completely disengaged from the thraldom of school, and fully adrift on the wide world of independent life, till I had left the white cliffs of Old England many leagues astern. The following brief despatch was penned just before starting; and I can remember the mixture of exultation and undefined dread of something that was to come, which I experienced while I was writing it:—

"*H.M.S. Leander, Spithead, July* 11, 1802.

"Yesterday the captain received his sailing orders, and we have now got up a Blue Peter at the fore-top, which is a signal for immediate sailing. We are just going to unmoor ship, and shall sail for Halifax immediately. So, farewell to England!"

Off we set accordingly; and it may be interesting, and perhaps useful, for youngsters in similar circumstances to know, that all the pleasurable anticipations came to pass sooner than any of those which were gloomy in their promise. Yet it is curious, that, since those days, when I was first launched upon blue water, I have very rarely set out upon a voyage without experiencing many misgivings, often amounting almost to a wish that some accidental incident might arise to check the expedition altogether. This is the more strange, as I have seldom, if ever, failed to find the reality more delightful than was expected, the difficulties more easily overcome, and the harvest of amusement and instruction more fertile, than any previous reading or conversation had led me to suppose the jog-trot course of a professional life could possibly afford.

I do not deny that I had sometimes a plaguy tough job of it to keep my spirits up to this mark; and though I never quite lost heart, I was often very low in the scale of resolution. So much so, that, on looking back to those times, I fear I can discover moments when, had good opportunities offered, I might perhaps have been tempted to cut and run. Fortunately for me, however, there never was the least choice left between perseverance and poverty; and I had been long taught to consider, that the bread of idleness, however supplied, was the most degrading food a gentleman could eat. It is true I was not then so strongly convinced as I am now, that many of the essential advantages of the primogeniture law lie on the side of the younger sons, yet I always felt that it was my duty, as well as my interest, to illustrate, practically, the truth of this seeming paradox.

The first damper to this magnanimous resolution of making myself useful in the world, was caused by a speech of our excellent captain, who, calling all the youngsters into his cabin, a few days after we were out of sight of land, addressed us in the following words:—

"Now, younkers, I have sent for you all, to tell you that you are not of the smallest use on board the ship; in fact, if anything, you are rather in the way: but since you are here, I have no objection to your learning your business, if you have a mind to do so. You shall, therefore, have your choice, either to keep watch or not, exactly as you please; only recollect this, if any of you decide to do your duty in the way proposed, you shall be made to perform it in earnest. So mind what you are about, and give me an answer to-morrow morning. Now, little fellows, be off with you!"

Out of about a dozen, I think there was only one other besides myself who decided upon keeping watch. Most of this party had been a cruise or two at sea before, and knew that pacing up and down the deck for four hours in the night, over and above the tasks of the day, was no joke; and they rather chuckled at the prospect of being let off thus easily. For my part, I was so grievously annoyed at the contemptuous official assurance of being of no use, that I never hesitated an instant, but caught eagerly at any opening which promised me the means of belying this disparaging assertion. It is true, I knew little or nothing of the duties which would be required; but I had a pretty distinct notion, that, provided any person has a specific course chalked out for him to follow, no matter how humble that path may be, there must be a better and a worse way of going over it; and, if so, that there will be a certain amount of distinction due to him who, in the first instance, resolves to do his business properly, and has afterwards perseverance enough to make good his pledge.

To a lad who has health and spirits, keeping watch is rather agreeable than otherwise. I speak from about twelve years of almost uninterrupted experience of the practice, when I say that, upon the whole, its pleasures outweigh its annoyances. There is no opiate that ever was devised which can give such hearty relish to sleep, as a good four hours' night-watch. Without refining or philosophising too deeply, every one, I am sure, who has tried the experiment, will recollect the sort of complete self-satisfaction with which he has "turned in," after having gone through his work, and stripped off his dripping clothes. Still less will he forget the delighted kind of hug, which he has bestowed upon himself, when fairly under the blankets. All the world is then forgotten; the gale may be rising; the ship in no great safety; the labours of the night just beginning: no matter, his watch is out; his task is done. "I'll go to sleep," he says; and, sure enough, a young middy, after the weary watch is out, lies down as perfect a personification of Shakspeare's ship-boy as imagination could desire. Though not literally perched on the high and giddy mast, he is pretty nearly as soundly rocked; for, after being bagged up in a hammock, and hoisted close to the beams, in the cable tier, with only a foot and a half of space above, and not half a foot below him, he is banged at every roll against the stanchions, or driven by the motion of the ship against the deck over-head. In spite of all this, added to the loud creaking of the lower-deck guns, and the hundred and fifty other noises above and below him, he sleeps through all, and sleeps soundly; or, as the Spaniards say, "Rienda suelta," that is, at full gallop.

There is another very satisfactory result of

keeping watch, besides the certainty of insuring good sleep. It not only defines the duty we have to perform, but the period in which it is to be done, so exactly, that all the rest of the time is free for us to make use of, in the way that most suits our own pleasure. To a person disposed to turn his spare moments to account, such privilege is a great affair, independently of the moral advantage of having a precise task to execute at stated hours. This obligation of working periodically seems indeed to act as a sort of hone, on which our intellects, as well as our industry, may be sharpened. Some reasoners and speculators on this matter go so far as to say, that a man of talents and fancy will often be able to turn his gifts to greater account, if forced to give up a considerable portion of his day to dull or even disagreeable drudgery, than if he had the whole twenty-four hours to himself. It has even been said, that the most successful and imaginative writer of our times used to consider himself indebted for some of his happiest flights to the necessity of plodding round and round the dull routine of a court of law, for many hours of every day. When he took wing to the country, in the vacation, the spring of his energies always became vastly more elastic than if he had not been chained to a desk for many months before.

Be this as it may, I, for my own part, certainly took great delight in keeping watch, and even rejoiced, now and then, in catching a good sound ducking, as it tended to assure me that there was no play, but real earnest, in what I was about. Indeed, during these early times, my chief apprehension seems to have been that I should be considered useless.

In some other respects, likewise, keeping watch possesses its advantages. Nothing produces more punctual habits, or contributes more directly to cast both mind and body into those trains of thought and of action which lead to certainty of purpose, by teaching us how much we may accomplish when we set about things regularly. The practice, also, of early trust is extremely salutary; and although the youngster of a watch has but a very small charge on his shoulders, what little he has soon makes him acquainted with the meaning of the word responsibility, and he is thus gradually brought up to court, rather than to shrink from, the exercise of high duties. He learns that the first object of his professional life is to perform what is required by the rules of the service in a proper manner, careless of the consequences. He is likewise taught the wholesome lesson, that any praise for so doing is not merely a secondary affair, but that such commendation essentially belongs only to those grand efforts, when an officer of enterprise and resource, in the midst of difficulties, adopts that particular line of conduct which the result proves to be best calculated to accomplish some great national purpose.

At the same time, although praise is not an article much used in naval discipline, I know few things which tend more directly to stimulate exertion, and confirm the best resolutions of a young officer, than some mark, no matter how small, of well-timed approbation. There is hardly any man so dull or so wicked, so old or so young, as not to be keenly alive to the influence of such commendation at the right moment. It is both interesting and practically important, also, to observe, that praise, like charity (of which it may be called a branch), can be dispensed by every one. There is no person so low in station, who, if he be inclined, may not do works of kindness to some of his shipmates. In fact, a ship's crew are so isolated from the rest of the world, and thrown so constantly together, that they can influence one another's happiness even more effectually than neighbours on shore have it in their power to do. Accordingly, there is no officer, man, or boy, in a ship of war, so circumstanced, who, in the exercise of his ordinary duties, and without departing from strict truth, may not give much pleasure to those under him or about him, and thus essentially tend to advance the best interests of the service, by making the motives to action spring from a desire to do well. This, after all, is the great secret of discipline.

In large ships, especially if they be destined, as the Leander was, to bear an admiral's flag, there are always many more midshipmen on board than are absolutely necessary for performing the duty. These young gentlemen are divided into three watches, and the individuals of each set are stationed on different parts of the deck. The mate of the watch, who is the principal person amongst them, with two or three youngsters, walks on the quarter-deck, always, of course, on the lee-side. Another midshipman, generally the second in seniority, has the honour of being posted on the forecastle; while a third, stationed abaft, walks on the poop. To these is added, sometimes, a single mid, whose business, as will be understood without minute explanation, is to watch the communications made by other ships in company, or to convey orders to them, by means of flags, which, in most cases, are hoisted abaft.

After a certain probation, I was promoted from youngster on the quarter-deck to have charge of the poop; and in the hope of being advanced, in due time, to the dignity of forecastle midshipman, became extremely assiduous, and sometimes rather too much so, as it would appear.

It was a positive order, and a very proper one, that no clothes should be hung up to dry except on the clothes' lines, or in the weather rigging, and even there only by permission of the officer in charge of that part of the ship. Every one, of course, is aware that nothing is considered so sluttish as hanging clothes below the gunwale, and especially on the davits or guys of the quarter boats. But all poop middies who have tried to keep these ropes clear of shirts and jackets, know that it is not very easy to exact obedience to their orders. In well-regulated ships, however, these apparently small matters are found to contribute much to the maintenance of uniformity and good order. They form the tracery or fringe, or, as it were, the ornamental parts of discipline, which, if properly attended to, generally imply that the more substantial requisites are not neglected. At all events, our first lieutenant was most particular on this subject; and when any shirt or pair of trousers was detected by his piercing eye, which had escaped the vigilance of the midshipman of the poop, the young gentleman was sure to fall under his biting censure, or, in the slang of the cock pit, was certain to "catch it."

I had constitutionally from my infancy, and

doubly so from the first day I went afloat, a great horror at being reproached, or "wigged," as we called it; and therefore laboured at all times with prodigious ardour to escape the torture of that direct, cutting, merciless sort of censure which so many persons consider the only proper vehicle of instruction when reproving the rising generation. As soon, therefore, as I was placed in command of the poop, I waged fierce war against the wet shirts of the sailors, or the still more frequent abomination of the well pipe-clayed trousers of the marines, who naturally affect that part of the ship, and are seldom seen forward amongst the seamen. All experience shows, however, that there is no due proportion between the difficulty of getting a trifling order obeyed, and that of accomplishing a great affair. People are apt to forget, that the obligation of obedience does not always turn upon the greater or less importance of the measure commanded, but upon the distinctness of the injunction. At all events, the unhappy poop-mids of my day were in hot water, almost every morning, about this petty affair, which the men, to our great plague, were exceedingly slow to take up, without more severe punishments than the first lieutenant was generally disposed to inflict. "It is entirely owing to your negligence, young gentlemen," said he to us one day, "that these wet things are so continually hung up, to the disgrace of the poop. If you would only contrive to keep your sleepy eyes open, and look about you, during your watch, instead of snoosing in the hammock netting, with the fly of the ensign wrapped about you, the men would never think of hanging up their clothes in such improper places."

We used to marvel much how he managed to point his sarcastic censure so exactly as to hit the precise fault we had been guilty of, and we resolved in future to keep out of its reach, so far as these eternal wet things went. Yet, in spite of all sorts of attention, the day seldom broke without some provoking article of dress making its fluttering appearance; though how on earth it got there, often baffled conjecture. Upon one occasion, my juvenile bile was fairly capsised, and having given warning, as I declared, for the hundred-and-fiftieth time, and all to no effect, I pulled out my knife, and cut the stops which tied a *shirt* to the jolly-boat's tackle-fall. Had I proceeded no further, all would have been right and proper; but, in my zealous rage, I leaped beyond the lines of my duty, and fairly threw the offending garment overboard!

Just as the sun peeped above the horizon, our most systematic of first lieutenants made his periodical appearance. I watched his eye as it glanced towards my department, and I chuckled a good deal, when I saw that my activity had baffled every attempt to detect a square inch of the forbidden drapery.

The decks, however, were hardly swabbed up, before a scamp of a mizen-top-man, with his hat in one hand, and smoothing down the hair in front of his head with the other, while he shifted his balance from leg to leg, addressed himself to the first lieutenant, evidently in the act of lodging a complaint. In the next minute I was called down, and interrogated as to my proceedings. The fact of my having thrown the lad's shirt overboard being admitted, I was ordered to recompense him for his loss by paying him the value in money; while he, in like manner, was punished for disobedience in hanging it up in so improper a situation.

A common-place premier would have stopped short there; but this judicious officer was of a different stamp; and I have often lamented, since those days, that he did not live to receive the grateful acknowledgments experience has taught me were his due, for this and many other lessons which at that time I could not justly appreciate.

It was his practice every evening, just before going to bed, to give to the mate of the watch a written order of what he wished executed in the course of the night, or early in the morning; and many an injunction, it may be supposed, his little neatly-bound order-book contained against the particular kind of delinquency above noticed. On the present occasion, however, the night orders consisted of these words alone:—

"Mr. Hall is the only gentleman who attends to his duty on the poop."

It was needless to point more distinctly, even to the youngest squeaker amongst us, how adroitly the scales of justice and good sense were balanced in this case. On my side, it was quite clear I had no business wantonly to cast away another man's property, merely because that property was not in its right place; and accordingly I was compelled to make full restitution. This, of itself, was a considerable censure. But as the fault really arose from disinterested zeal, in furthering the objects of the service, the first lieutenant, by one of those well-timed notes of approbation, which bind inferiors to their duty far more strongly than punishments ever deter them from neglecting it, took care to improve the lesson to my advantage, by putting his official sense of that zeal upon record. Small as the incident was, there are few things which have since happened, that have given me more permanent satisfaction than this slight, passing notice. From the strong manner, also, in which it disposed me to esteem the person who thus distinguished me, I can understand the secret by which great commanders rivet the affections and secure the best services of the people about them. The opposite course, it should not be forgotten, holds still more true. While half-a-dozen words such as these, written at a proper time, may fix the gratitude of a whole life, a single careless word, spoken at the wrong season, or in the wrong tone of voice, though perhaps void of hurtful intention, will often rankle for years, and permanently estrange men from one another, who might otherwise become truly attached.

The excellent officer above alluded to, I am grieved to say, was lost to the service a few years afterwards. When lieutenant of the Conqueror, in 1808, on her passage to Lisbon, he, and about half the ship's company, were seized with ophthalmia. He never fully recovered his sight, and though eventually promoted to the rank of commander, he was not able to serve long, and finally became stone blind. He still, however, expected his post promotion with so much anxiety, that when he found the Admiralty passed him over, the disappointment preyed so deeply on his mind, once so vigorous, that it broke to pieces! His intellects were literally destroyed by the mere denial of an honour which must have been purely

nominal, as he never could have gone afloat. Had he but retained his sight, however, he would in all probability ere long have proved himself one of the most valuable officers in His Majesty's service. But his fate was different, and he soon died blind, insane, and broken-hearted!

I have already mentioned, I think, that I was very little for my age, somewhat impatient in disposition, and further, that I spoke the hideous patois of Edinburgh, with the delectable accompaniment of the *burr* of Berwick. These circumstances, which ought, perhaps, to have excited pity, acted and re-acted upon one another not a little to my disadvantage, and greatly to my discomfort.

In addition to other sources of annoyance, I was more than usually subject to sea-sickness whenever there came the least breeze of wind, and about once a week was pestered with the toothache. In the midst of these mortifications, I reckoned with confidence on the support of my own countrymen, of whom there were several amongst the elder mids. I was led into this error by having often heard of the way in which Scotchmen hang together in foreign parts. But these wicked fellows, though very truly my friends, were not always disposed to aid and assist me in the precise way I wished; and young folks, as well as their seniors, do not like to be obliged except on their own terms. I had also unluckily taken it into my head that I spoke English with remarkable purity—a sad mistake! Upon one occasion I missed some money; and a brother mid seeing me in distress, asked what was the matter.

"Oh," said I, "I have tint a half-guinea."

"Tint!" cried the other, "what's that?"

At this moment one of my quizzing countrymen happening to pass, and hearing the question, burst into a laugh, and explained, that "tint," being interpreted, meant "lost;" adding, "none but a Sawney from the north" would have used such a barbarous word, unknown in England.

"Eh, Saunders, where are ye gawin?" and many other taunting expressions to the disparagement of my country, which will hardly bear the press, were flung at me from the English portion of the circle now assembled to hear this confusion of tongues. If the Scotch, in its best dress, be bad enough, it is truly savage in the mouth of a pretender; and I was doubly provoked to hear its Doric beauties marred by southern lips. I made play, therefore, for some time, but presently became quite angry, which was exactly what the rogues desired. Then, suddenly seized with a bright thought, I turned short round on the original framer of the mischief, whose interpretation of my native word "tint" had brought the laugh upon me, and said, in a rage, "I dare say it was you that stole the half-guinea!"

For one moment and no more I had the laugh with me; but, in the next instant, a shower of thumps from the accused party vindicated the freedom of cockpit justice, and set the whole possé of us small fry to the right and left, like a shoal of flying-fish sprung upon by a dolphin.

This affair had scarcely blown by, when I got into a second scrape, also with a countryman, who to the hour of his death was one of the best friends ever had, but whose fate it was, at that early period, to inspire me with many doubts as to the value of his good offices, albeit they were every way kind and disinterested.

There is no class of persons in his Majesty's naval service who have such ravenous appetites as the younger class of middies; indeed, their plates and platters generally leave the berth as clean as they were before the dinner entered. What may be the cause of this voracity it is needless to inquire; the fact of their prodigious appetites is universal. And it will easily be imagined that, in such a community, the Esquimaux maxim of first come, first served, would sometimes introduce itself into the practice of those polished young gentlemen. One day, after keeping the forenoon watch, I went down at half-past twelve to dinner, and found nothing left on the board but a morsel of the ship's beef, which we generally called salt junk, and sometimes believed to be salt horse, resembling very much a piece of mahogany, and often quite as sapless. To this was added a very small portion of suet pudding, called in our lingo, dough, or duff, and differing but little in aspect and weight from good honest pipe-clay. It has been very properly observed of a young midshipman, that, "although God may turn his heart, the devil cannot turn his stomach;" and certainly, upon this occasion, I made no sort of objection to the victuals set before me, except as to the quantity. In five minutes, the dish and the plate had returned to that habitual state of purity, which would have rendered the office of scullion a complete sinecure, had we been honoured with such an attendant.

While I was ruminating upon this meagre fare, one of the oldsters bawled out to me, "Come, youngster, you have done your dinner—march off! I want your place at the table to write my log up, so scull away with you!" And, in spite of Lord Chesterfield, which he was constantly reading, he instantly shovelled me right into the cockpit. What with the indignity of my exit, which I cannot more particularly describe, without a greater breach of the graces than I choose to risk even at this long interval of time, and what with the empty state of my stomach, I mounted upon deck again, of course in a precious bad humour, not a quarter of an hour from the time I had dived.

"Hollo! Maister Saunders," cried one of my Scotch friends, "what's the matter with you? You look as black as your countryman when he was caught half-way through a hole in the orchard wall."

"Why," said I, glad to find some vent for my disappointment, "to tell you the truth, I have not got my share of the pudding to-day."

"Oh! ho! that's it, is it? Capital! Your share of the pudding!—excellent!" And away he shot down the ladder, to pass the joke amongst the rest below; so that, by and by, I was assailed at every turn with inquiries touching my "share of the pudding;" and my unfortunate speech, translated into various dialects of what they all thought Scotch, merely because it was not English, was sung out like a ballad, for the amusement of the whole fraternity, for the next week.

This, and the half-guinea story, would soon have passed off for some other joke, had no tone of the mess been reading Sir Launcelot Greaves, in which book one Justice Gobble is described as a

great glutton. The malicious young reader no sooner came to the place than he roared out that he had found a name for me! and I was dubbed forthwith Mr. Justice Gobble, which title I retained till another, somewhat more to my taste, and more appropriate, I hoped, was given in exchange.

'I had heard or read somewhere, that if a bottle, well corked, were let down into the sea for a hundred fathoms or so, and then drawn up again, it would be found full of fresh water. Like most modern discoverers, I took upon me to suppose that this experiment had not been properly tried before. So, one fine, calm morning, I borrowed a couple of cod lines, which were then in grand preparation for the banks of Newfoundland, and having stowed myself out of sight, under the breast of one of the lower-deck guns, I plunged my well-loaded apparatus overboard. Some one detected me when I was just beginning to haul in the line; and, before the lead reached the surface, half-a-dozen of my less scientific messmates were perched on the neighbouring guns and chests, cracking their jokes upon my proceedings. A huge horse-laugh was got ready to explode upon me as I examined the bottle, and found the cork in its place, but inverted, and the contents as salt as need be.

"Well, now," said one of the party, "this is funny enough—Justice Gobble is turned Experimental Philosopher; who would have thought it?" and off they scattered to laugh at something else—light-hearted, and careless of all things about them—up to any mischief or any business, and gradually forming themselves, by an involuntary process, for the right performance of those varied duties which belong to their calling, and which, like the elements they have to deal with, are scarcely ever two days alike.

Some of these lads had a turn for mechanics, some for navigation; others devoted much of their time to rigging, and different branches of seamanship; their hands being constantly in the tar-bucket. A few applied themselves to reading and drawing; several desperate hands stuck resolutely to the flute; one or two thought of nothing but dress; and a few swore a pretty steady friendship to the grog-bottle; while every now and then a sentimental youth deemed himself inspired, and wrote execrable verses, which we thought capital. By far the greater number of these promising young men have found too early graves, some on land, some in the deep sea!

On crossing the banks of Newfoundland, the ship was hove to, for the purpose of sounding; and the quarter-master having tied a baited hook to the deep-sea lead, a noble cod was drawn up from the depth of ninety fathoms. Upon this hint, the captain, very considerately, agreed to lie by for an hour or two; and some fifty lines being put over, the decks were soon covered, fore and aft, with such a display of fish as even the mighty Billingsgate has rarely witnessed.

People who know nothing of a sea-life fancy that fish is not a rarity with us; but there is nothing of which we taste so little; so that the greatest treat by far, when we come into port, is a dish of fresh soles or mackerel; and even the commonest fish that swims is looked upon as a treasure. It is only in soundings that any are to be met with; for, in the open and bottomless ocean, we meet with nothing but whales, porpoises, dolphins, sharks, bonitas, and flying-fish. I shall, perhaps, have occasion to describe the mode of catching, dressing, and eating, all of these: for we demolish every one of them, excepting only the shark, between which and the sailors there rages an interminable war, something not unlike that which exists, from age to age, between the Indians and the Esquimaux, in which the sharks may be compared to the Indians, who eat their prisoners, and we to the Esquimaux, who only kill their captives, but prefer eating something else.

I never could conceive, or even form a probable conjecture, how it is that some persons manage to catch fish, while others never get beyond a nibble. It is easy to understand that, in angling, a certain degree of skill, or choice of situation, may determine the probable amount of success. But when a line is let down to the depth of eighty or a hundred fathoms, or even to twenty or thirty feet, quite out of sight, what has skill to do there? And yet, in a ship on the banks of Newfoundland, or in a boat on the Thrumcap shoals in Halifax harbour, I have seen one man hauling in cods or haddocks as fast as he could bait his hooks; while others, similarly circumstanced in all apparent respects, might fret and fidget for half a day without getting a single bite.

There can be no doubt, of course, that intellectual power must be in operation at one end of the line, otherwise no fish will come to the other; but the puzzle is, by what mysterious process can human intelligence manage to find its way, like electricity, down the line to the bottom of the sea? I have often asked successful fishermen what they did to make the fish bite; but they seldom gave any available answer. Sometimes they declared that it depended on the bait. "Well then," I have answered, "let me take your line and do you take mine." But in two minutes after we had changed places, my companion was pulling in his fish as fast as ever, while not a twitch was given to my new line, though, just before, the fish appeared to be jostling one another for the honour of my friend's hook, to the total neglect of that which had been mine, now in high vogue amongst them.

There is some trick, or sleight of hand, I suppose, by which a certain kind of motion is given to the bait so as to assimilate it to that of the worms which the fishes most affect in their ordinary researches for food. But, probably, this art is no more to be taught by description, or to be learnt without the drudgery of practice, than the dexterity with which an artist represents nature, or a dancer performs pirouettes. Uninstructed persons therefore, who, like myself, lose patience because they do not succeed at the first cast of the line, had better turn their attention to something more congenial.

Almost the only fish I ever caught was during this first voyage across the Atlantic, when, after my hook had been down a whole weary hour, I drew it up in despair. It felt so light, that I imagined the line must have been accidentally broken; but presently, and greatly to my astonishment, I beheld a huge cod float to the top, swollen to twice the usual dimensions by the expansion of its sound, as the air-bag is called, which lies along

the back-bone. At the depth of eighty or ninety fathoms, this singular apparatus is compressed by the enormous addition of fifteen or sixteen atmospheres. But when the air is relieved of this weight, by approaching the surface, the strength of the muscles proves inadequate to retain it in its condensed form; and its consequent expansion not only kills the fish, but often bursts it open as completely as if it had been blown up with gunpowder.

After a passage of about six weeks, we reached Halifax in Nova Scotia; and I can perfectly recollect the feelings with which I first put my foot on shore in the New World. "At last," I said to myself, "I am decidedly abroad; and it shall go hard with me but this round globe shall be well tramped over by these feet before I rest!" This resolution has been tolerably kept; but it is perhaps worthy of remark, that almost the whole of the journeys alluded to have been accomplished in the jog-trot routine of professional avocations, and generally without any express design on my part. It is true I once took a hasty scamper over Europe, and, more lately, a deliberate jaunt in North America; but with these exceptions, a small trip to Prince Edward's Island, in the gulf of St. Lawrence, and a three years' tour in Italy and Switzerland and Germany, every league of my voyaging and travelling has been in the exercise of purely professional duties.

I have mentioned this, merely because I think it furnishes a sort of encouragement to naval officers, of all ranks and ages, who, unless they be very stupid, or very unfortunate, or both, may, in the course of their lives, probably have nearly as ample means of observation in foreign parts, as if they had been born to fortunes, and spent them in the sole occupation of travelling. It is surely a pleasant affair to be carried about from place to place free of cost; and perhaps there is also some advantage in our being thus tossed about without any free choice of our own. There is often bitter disappointment, it is true, in being hurried away before our sage remarks are half made, with curiosity half satisfied, only to be plunged into new scenes, piping hot from those we have left. But by this means the attention is kept briskly alive; and the powers of observation, being forced to act on the instant, are certainly rendered more acute. From so much, and such varied practice, also, the mind becomes more decided and clear, as well as more prompt, in its conclusions. In consequence, perhaps, of this accumulation of knowledge, every new country visited appears more fertile than the last in objects of interest, till at length the field of view seems so thickly crowded, that the naval traveller, instead of having to search for materials, generally finds himself overpowered by their abundance, and scarcely knows which to lay his hand upon, in order to describe the effect produced.

It is the curious property of well-directed inquiry into any branch of natural knowledge, that the thirst for such investigations generally goes on increasing with the indulgence; and, what is equally or even more to the purpose, the motives to perseverance are proportionably augmented. I believe there are few exceptions to this rule; and I think it may be observed, that, in the Navy, precisely as an officer rises in the service, so his means of travelling to good purpose are improved likewise. As he advances in rank, his introductions to society become more easy and extensive, and his facilities for seeing strange things are multiplied at every step, till at length, when he arrives at the command of a ship, he finds himself in one of the most agreeable situations, perhaps, that the nature of things admits of for viewing the world to advantage.

It must be recollected, too, that the chief interest of most countries, and especially of new countries, lies on their sea-coasts, where the first towns are naturally erected. In those cases where this rule does not hold good, naval officers often contrive to visit the interior: but wherever they go, they are sure of a hearty welcome, with a ready access to all that is worthy of investigation. Their best passport, in fact, is their uniform; their best letters of introduction, the columns of the Navy-list; and if in any case they fail to profit by the opportunities thus placed within their reach, the fault may lie with the dull nature of the particular parties themselves, and not with their glorious profession. In all probability, the very same persons who, as officers, can turn their naval opportunities to no account in the way of travelling, would have done no better in any other situation in life.

This reminds me of a tailor at Halifax, who, on being sadly provoked by some of the scampish band amongst us, for not paying his abominably long bills, said, in a rage, in the cockpit, before us all, that after having tried his son in half a dozen professions, without any chance of success, he was now resolved, as a last resource, to make a midshipman of him! This sarcasm was uttered during the short peace of Amiens, when we first visited Halifax, a period when the mids had so little real business to attend to, that they seized eagerly upon any opening for a joke. As soon, therefore, as the tailor had quitted the ship, it was resolved to punish him for this uncourteous speech.

It had not escaped the notice of his nautical auditors, that this vulgar fraction of his species prided himself, in a most especial degree, on the dignity of an enormous tail or queue, which reached half-way down his back; and it was resolved, in secret council, that this appendage should be forthwith docked.

Nothing, I must fairly own, could be more treacherous than the means devised to lower the honour and glory of the unfortunate tailor. Being formally invited to dinner with us, he was well plied with grog, mixed according to the formidable rule for making what is called a North-wester, which prescribes that one half of each glass shall consist of rum, and the other half of rum and water. This potent beverage soon brought our guest under the table. After which, though he could scarcely stand, he was first lifted up, and then shoved along, in noisy triumph (like old Silenus) out of the berth, and placed in the tier, across the bends of the small bower cable, where, after many a grunt and groan at the rugged nature of his couch, he at length fell asleep.

His beautiful tail, (the pride of his life!) was presently glued to the strands of the cable, by means of a lump of pitch: and such was the tenacity of this substance, that in the morning, when, on the day-light gun being fired directly

over his head, poor snip awoke, he could no more detach himself from the spot than could Captain Lemuel Gulliver in like circumstances. His noddle being still as confused as any skein of thread, he knew not where he lay, nor what held him down. After tugging, therefore, at his hair for a minute or two, he roared out lustily for help. One of the mids, seized with the brilliant idea of making the tailor the finisher of his own fate, hurried to his assistance, and, handing him a knife, roared out:

"By all means, my old boy, make haste, as the devil has certainly got hold of you by the tail!"

The poor tradesman, terrified out of his wits, and in great horror at his mysterious situation, instantly did as he was desired, and cut away lustily, little dreaming that his own rash hand was shearing off the highest and most cherished honours of his house! On turning round, he beheld with infinite chagrin and dismay the ravished locks, which, for half a century and more, had been the joint delight of himself and his tender partner Rebecca. As the thought of returning tail-less to his home crossed his half-bewildered brain, he exclaimed, in agony of spirit, to his malicious tormentors—"Oh Lord! oh Lord! I am a lost man to my Becky!"

The revenge of the insulted middies was now complete; and this expression of being a "lost man to one's Becky" became a by-word in the ship, for many years afterwards, to denote the predicament of any one who, having got himself into a scrape, came out of it with loss.

CHAPTER IV.

BERMUDA IN THE PEACE.

The Leander, a fifty-gun ship, is well known to the profession, as having formed one of the sturdiest combatants in the action of the Nile, though not strictly entitled to a place in line of battle. She afterwards maintained a glorious, though unsuccessful fight with a large French seventy-four, the Généreux, when on her way to England with Nelson's despatches. To our eyes she was the prettiest ship of her class; and she became permanently endeared to the memory of all who sailed on board, especially to those who first found in her a practical illustration of the beautiful thought—that our "march is on the mountain wave, our home is on the deep."

This domestic character, indeed, gives the Navy of England its peculiar distinction, and mainly contributes to its success. For English naval men, and they alone, do truly make the sea their home. When afloat, they have no other thoughts of professional duty or of happiness but what are connected with the vessel in which they swim; they take a pride in her very looks, as they might in those of a daughter; and bring up her crew to honourable deeds, as they would wish to instruct their sons. Even the rate of sailing of each ship in a fleet is a subject of never-ending discussion among all classes of the officers, midshipmen, and crews; every soul of whom considers his own individual honour involved in all that his ship does, or is capable of doing. This is true, almost universally; but it is most striking, no doubt, in our first ship, which, like our first love, is supposed to drink up, from the opening flower of our young feelings, the richest drops of sentiment, never to be outdone, or even equalled, by future attachments! I owe, indeed, much good companionship and many sincere obligations to other vessels; yet I am sure that, if I live to be Lord High Admiral, the old Leander must still remain the ship nearest and dearest to my nautical heart. I remember every corner about her—every beam—every cabin—every gun. I can almost look back to the school on board of her, with much of that affectionate sort of interest with which I observe Eton men regard the place of their education. Whenever any of the old Leanders meet, who were shipmates together at the happy time I speak of, every other topic is speedily swept aside, and, for hours together, the boyish adventures, and even the most ordinary events of the dear old ship, form, out of all sight, the most delightful subject of conversation. It signifies nothing that every one of the party has gone over the same round of stories and jokes, in the same company, fifty times before; they invariably flow back again, recommended by increasing interest, and by that genuine freshness of spirits, so "redolent of joy and youth, which breathes a second spring."

Most of the survivors have, I trust, experienced, that the gay summer of life which succeeded this opening season of their professional existence in the Leander, has been as full of enjoyment as they had hoped for, and that life has gone on to furnish them only with more extensive views and higher motives to useful action. It may also have taught some of us to discover that the real and permanent pleasures of this world lie close alongside of its duties; and that, as the greater part of our success depends upon ourselves, so does nearly all our happiness.

On the 6th of December, we sailed from Halifax, with a fresh north-westerly wind, in a day so bitterly cold, that the harbour was covered over with a vapour called "the Barber," a sort of low fog, which clings to the surface of the water, and sweeps along with these fierce winter blasts in such a manner as to cut one to the very bone. The Barber is evidently caused by a condensation of the moisture close to the water in this severe temperature. As the thermometer, when we sailed, stood at eleven degrees below zero, nothing but the violence of the wind, which broke the surface into a sheet of foam, prevented our being frozen up in the harbour, like Parry and his north-western voyagers at Melville Island.

On our dashing by one of the lower wharfs of the town of Halifax, just before coming to the narrow passage between George's Island and the main land on the south side of this magnificent inlet, a boat put off to us, having a gentleman on board, who, by some accident, had missed his passage. He succeeded in getting alongside the ship; but, in seizing hold of a rope which was thrown to him from the main-chains, one of the boatmen, in his hurry, caught a turn with the line round the after thwart, instead of making it fast forward. The inevitable and immediate consequence of this proceeding was, to raise the stern of the boat quite out of the water, and, of course, to plunge her nose under the surface. I suppose even a landsman will comprehend how this hap-

pened, when it is mentioned that the ship was running past at the rate of ten knots.

In the twinkling of an eye, the whole party, officer, boatmen, and all, were seen floating about grasping at the oars or striking out for the land, distant, fortunately, only a few yards from them; for the water thereabouts is so deep, that a ship in sailing out or in may safely graze the shore. Considering the intensity of the cold, we were quite astonished to see people swimming away so easily; but we afterwards learned from some of the party, that, owing to the water being between forty and fifty degrees warmer than the air, they felt, when plunged into it, as if they had been soused into a hot bath. The instant, however, they reached the pier, and were lugged out, like half-drowned rats, they became literally enclosed in firm cases of ice from head to foot! This very awkward coat of mail could not be removed without considerable difficulty; and one of them told me, that he could not move at all till he had been laid for some hours in a well-warmed bed, between two other persons; and, for several months afterwards, he remained too unwell to leave his room.

For us to stop, at such a time and place, was impossible; so away we shot like an arrow past Chebucto Head, Cape Sambro, and sundry other fierce-looking black promontories of naked rock, smoothed off, apparently, by the attrition of some vast current—such as that of the gulf stream—when, in ancient geological epochs, all that part of America lay submerged beneath the ocean.

But we had no time, on the day I speak of, for any such geological speculations. The breeze, which rose rapidly to a hard gale, soon split our main-topsail to threads, and sent the fragments cracking off to leeward in the storm, in such grand style, that, to this hour, I can almost fancy I distinguish the noise in my ears. I know, indeed, few things more impressive than the deep-toned thunder-like sounds caused by the flapping of a wet topsail, in such a fierce squall as this, when both the sheets are carried away, and the unconfined sail is tugging and tearing to get clear of the yard, which bends so fearfully, that even the lower mast sometimes wags about like a reed. I certainly have heard crashes among the clouds far louder than the sounds alluded to; but have seldom known thunder-peals more effective or startling than those of a sail going to pieces in such a tempest of wind and rain.

I was standing, where I had no business to be, on the weather side of the quarter-deck, holding on stoutly by one of the belaying-pins, and wondering in what catastrophe this novel scene was to end. I had an obscure idea that the ship was going to the bottom; but the Admiral looked up to the splitting sail as composedly as possible, and only desired that the main-top-men, whose exertions were quite useless, should be called down, out of the way of the ropes, which were smacking about their heads. Yet I could see, every now and then, the weather-wise glance of the veteran's eye directed to windward, in anxious hope that matters would mend. But they only became worse; and at last, when the foremast seemed to be really in danger, for it bent over like a cane, though the foresail had been reefed, he waited not to run through the usual round of etiquettes by which, on board ship, an admiral's commands are generally transmitted, by regular steps, down to the executive; but exclaimed, with a voice so loud, that it made me start right over to the lee side of the deck:—

"Man the fore-clue garnets!"

In the next minute the sail rose gradually to the yard, and the groaning ship, by this time sorely strained to her innermost timber, seemed to be at once relieved from the pressure of the canvas which had borne her headlong, right into the seas, making the old barky tremble from stem to stern, as if she were going to pieces.

The next thing to be done was to get in the jib-boom, in order to ease the bowsprit. In effecting this operation, rather troublesome at all times, one of the primest of our seamen fell overboard. He was the second captain of the forecastle; and the steadiness of his admirable skill as a steersman had, one day, elicited the complimentary remark from the captain, that he must surely have nailed the compass-card to the binnacle. On this, and other accounts, he had long been so much esteemed in the ship, that more than the usual degree of regret was felt for his melancholy fate. I saw the poor fellow pitch headlong into the water, and I watched him as he floated past, buoyant as a cork, and breasting the waves most gallantly, with an imploring look towards us, which I shall never forget; but in less than a minute he was out of sight. A boat could hardly have lived in such weather, and no further attempt was made, or perhaps could have been made, to save him, than to throw over ropes, which fell short of their mark. Although we soon lost all traces of the drowning seaman, it is probable he may have kept sight of us, as we drifted quickly to leeward under our bare poles, long after we had ceased to distinguish his figure in the yest of waves. This gale, the first I ever saw, was also one of the fiercest. It lasted for three days, totally dispersed our little squadron, well nigh foundered one of them, the Cambrian, and sent her hobbling into Bermuda some days after us, with the loss of her main-mast and all three top-masts.

Bermuda seemed to us mids a very barren place indeed, as it produced scarcely any articles of great utility, such as we required. So few bullocks or sheep were at that time reared on the island, that we soon came to consider it rather a wonder to see fresh meat on any table; while among the lower classes, in those days, such a luxury was never known. What may be the case now, I know not; but although the ships did indeed get fresh meat now and then, it was in very scanty portions; whereas in all other places, our voracious maws were supplied regularly with fresh grub, as we called it, every day.

The Bermudas consist of upwards of a hundred little islands, clustered round two or three large ones. The seat of government then lay in St. George's Island, which measures about four or five miles long, by two broad, and is very low. The town is built on the south-east side, on a gentle and very pretty declivity which fronts the harbour. None of the houses possess more than two stories; they are built of the soft freestone of which all these islands are composed, and most of them own but one chimney. In walking through the streets in hot days, such is the

extreme whiteness of the walls, that the glare is very painful to the eyes; but as most of these dwellings are surrounded by bananas, calabashes, orange-trees, and by various members of the palm tribe, the disagreeable effect of the light is not felt, except in the open streets. This neat little town runs across the valley about half a mile each way, and was then mostly inhabited by blacks, a great many of whom were householders, who had gained their freedom by purchase or some other means. What was curious enough, most of these manumitted negroes held under them slaves as black as themselves. The slaves were never allowed to have fire-arms in their hands, for fear of revolt; indeed, it was said they were considerably more numerous than the freemen in the island; and no slave was allowed to go about the streets after nine o'clock at night.

We found the black people, generally speaking, very gentle, docile, and kind; and when we entered any of their houses, though they had but little to offer us, that little was always given with much simple hospitality. We saw more hospitality, and much less reserve, among the blacks than among those of our own colour. It is true, the means of entertaining strangers in those days were but scanty; for the inhabitants, even of the better class, we were told, lived mostly upon salt meat, brought from America in vessels which pass, like market-boats, backwards and forwards during all the year.

We had read somewhere, in what we considered fanciful tales, of countries in which forests of cedar were to be found; but, until visiting Bermuda, we hardly believed such stories. At that fairy island, this tree constitutes the most common wood, or that of which every ship and boat is built: the floors, beams, and furniture of the houses, are likewise constructed entirely of this fragrant timber. It is not the cedar of Lebanon, but resembles in appearance, when growing, the yew of England, though it seldom attains the same height. It yields an agreeable smell, and bears a little blue berry, about the size of a pea, which, though sweet to the taste, is very dry. The wood, on being cut up and planed, looks well for a little while, but soon turns pale and chalky; nor is it capable of receiving a good polish. For ship-building it is much esteemed on account of its durability; and is pretty well known to most people as the wood of their pencils. Orange and lemon trees grow, also, in such abundance, that at first we were quite enchanted; and seeing upon all the branches the fruit thickly clustered, we climbed up to pick them off, in hopes of a grand feast, but were mortified to find them of that bitter kind which, though very excellent for making marmalade, are good for nothing else.

Hardly any birds are to be seen, except the common blue and red birds of the island, the plumage of which is very brilliant. They are about the size of a fieldfare; but neither the one nor the other sings a note. In the midshipmen's berth, accordingly, we had no scruple of conscience about baking many a score of them in our pies, and demolishing them, in the absence of more substantial fare.

Besides St. George's, there are numerous lesser islands, and a large district, called the Continent, from its being by far the most spacious in the cluster; no less, I believe, than twelve or fifteen miles from end to end! At the north-western end of the group lies Ireland Island, on which an extensive naval establishment has of late years been erected; close to that spot is now the anchorage for ships of war. The population of those islands was calculated, at the time I speak of, at near twenty thousand, the greater part of whom were blacks, and principally slaves.

The rock of the islands of Bermuda is of a very soft, coarse freestone, full of pores; so soft, indeed, that if it be required to make an additional window in a house, there is nothing to be done, we were told, but to hire a black fellow, who, with a saw, could speedily cut an opening in any part of the wall.

How far this sketch of Bermuda, taken from old scanty notes and faint recollections, may now be true, I cannot tell. The cedar groves and orange trees, the blue birds, the rocks, and the coral islands, I dare say, all remain just as before. The seat of government has been changed to the western end of the island, and the men-of-war, instead of lying in Murray's anchorage, on the north side of St. George's, have now found a more secure roadstead further west; lastly, we may thank God, the slaves are now all free!

There is nothing more remarkable in this singular cluster of islands than the extensive coral reefs which fend off the sea on the northern side, and stretch out in a semicircular belt, at the distance of two or three leagues from the land. If I recollect rightly, only one of these ledges, called the North Rock, shows its head above water. As all the others lie out of sight below the surface, they form one of the most dangerous traps that nature has ever set in the path of mariners. On these treacherous reefs we saw, every winter, many a poor vessel bilged, at moments when the crew fancied themselves in perfect security, and indeed had good reason, from seeing the land at such a distance.

Dangerous though they be, however, there are few things more beautiful to look at than these groves of corallines when viewed through two or three fathoms of clear and still water. It is hardly an exaggeration to assert, that even the bright colours of the rainbow are put to shame on a sunny day, by what meets the eye on looking into the calm sea in those fairy regions. On the other hand, there are not many things, in the anxious range of navigation, more truly terrific, or, in fact, more dangerous, than these same beautiful submarine flower-beds, raising their treacherous heads, like the fascinating syrens of old, or the fair and false mermaids of a later epoch. If, by sad fortune, the unwary sailor once gets entangled among them, it is too well known that his chance of escape is but small.

They tell a story at Bermuda ("the still vexed Bermoothes" of Shakspeare) of a boatman who, it is said, lived by these disasters, and who once went off to an unlucky vessel, fairly caught, like a fly in a cobweb, amongst the coral reefs, not far from the North Rock. The wrecker, as persons of his trade are called, having boarded the bewildered ship, said to the master,

"What will you give me now to get you out of this place?"

"On, any thing you like—name your sum."

"Five hundred dollars?"

"Agreed! agreed!" cried the other. Upon

which the treacherous pilot "kept his promise truly to the ear, but broke it to the hope," by taking the vessel out of an abominably bad place, only to fix her in one a great deal more intricate and perilous.

"Now," said the wrecker to the perplexed and doubly-cheated stranger, "there never was a ship in this scrape, that was known to get out again; and, indeed, there is but one man alive who knows the passages, or could, by any possibility, extricate you—and that's me!"

"I suppose," dryly remarked the captain, "that 'for a consideration' you would be the man to do me that good service. What say you to another five hundred dollars to put me into clear water, beyond your infernal reefs?"

The hard bargain was soon made; and a winding passage, unseen before, being found, just wide enough, and barely deep enough, for the vessel to pass through, with only six inch es to spare under her keel, in half an hour she was once more in blue water, out of soundings, and out of danger.

"Now, master rapscallion of a wrecker," cried the disentangled mariner, "tit for tat is fair play all the world over; and, unless you hand me back again my thousand dollars, I'll cut the tow-rope of your thievish-looking boat, and then, instead of returning evil for evil, as I ought by rights to do, I'll be more of a Christian, and do you a very great service, by carrying you away from one of the most infamous places in the world, to the finest country imaginable—I mean America. And as you seem to have a certain touch of black blood in your veins, I may chance to get good interest for my loan of these thousand dollars, by selling you for a slave in Charleston negro-market! What say you, my gay Mudian?"

We lay at Bermuda, moored in Murray's anchorage, for the greater part of the winters both of 1802 and 1803. The war had not yet broken out, and, in the absence of active service, we were fain to catch hold of anything to amuse and occupy ourselves. The master, and a gang of youngsters who were fond of navigation, set about surveying the coral reefs already mentioned. This party of philosophers, as they were of course dubbed, landed on St. David's Head, and other conspicuous points of land, to ascertain the longitude with more care; to observe the latitude and the variation of the compass; or to measure the perpendicular rise and fall of the tides; or, lastly, and much the most frequently, to have a good hour's swim in the deliciously-warm sea. It will be easily understood, that all and each of these inquiries furnished to those persons, whose duty and pleasure it was to attend to them, an inexhaustible field of occupation, and of interest likewise.

At first sight, many of these pursuits may appear trivial; but it ought to be recollected that, although it be easy enough to make the observations enumerated, and many others of the same nature, in a rough way, there is hardly any scientific experiment which, if it be required to be tried in the best possible style, does not demand much attention and labour. For example, it seems a very simple affair to draw a base or straight line on the ground; but if the measurement is to be very exact, or of a particular length, so as to be neither more nor less, the problem is one of the utmost difficulty, which has fully exercised, and still employs, the talents of some of the ablest engineers of the day. In fact, these refinements in surveying and in observing are pretty much like the pound of flesh question in the Merchant of Venice; with one comfortable difference, that the philosopher's neck is not in such danger, even if, in a base of half-a-dozen miles, he should happen to err in the estimation of half-a-dozen hair-breadths! It is well for young officers to recollect, however, that there is always a tolerably formidable professional tribunal, before which a man who undertakes such tasks is apt to be arraigned, and, if found wanting, pretty severely dealt with.

Sailors, like the element upon which they are tossed about, are scarcely ever at rest, and are seldom satisfied with what has been done before them. Consequently, the moment a ship arrives at a port, the navigators straightway erect their observatory, fix up their instruments, set their clocks a-going, and commence an attack, like the giants of old, upon the very heavens; and all for what? They say to themselves, that this is done for the benefit of science, for the advancement of geographical or astronomical knowledge; and so it is. But, along with these pure and lofty motives, there may enter some others, not quite so sublime, but perhaps equally operative in producing diligence. We have a lurking kind of malicious expectation of discovering that our predecessors have not made out their latitudes, or longitudes, or whatever the observations be, with the precision we ourselves hope to attain. It does not much matter whether the superior accuracy we expect to reach arises from our having better instruments in our hands, or from having more leisure, or better opportunities at command. So long as we contrive to do the required job in a more efficient style than it has been done before, so long do we count upon getting the credit due to superiority. These honours, it is true, are worn only till somebody coming later shall jostle us out of our seats, by substituting still more exact work. The desire to avoid being thrust on one side in this way, and forgotten, is a strong motive to vigorous application on the occasions alluded to, and helps essentially to quicken that delightful interest which almost always attends an investigation of the properties of natural objects.

It is probably requisite to this enjoyment that the pursuit followed should have some specific purpose in view; if professional, so much the better. If a man, quite uninstructed, shall start up and say, in the abstract, "I mean to study botany or astronomy," or whatever else his fancy may select, he will, in all probability, find the pursuit as great a bore to himself as it will inevitably prove to those friends whom he endeavours to persuade that it is the most delightful thing in the world to be a "savant." Still, young folks, in any situation, and most of all in the Navy, need not be afraid; for they can hardly ever be cast into situations where, if their minds have been properly trained, first at home and then on board ship, they may not hit upon ample materials to keep their heads and hands in motion, and at the same time to advance their professional objects.

One of our party of mids, who has since turned

out a valuable and enterprising officer, took it in his head to make a trip in a whale-boat belonging to the Bermuda fishery. Having ascertained the time when the whale-boats started, he obtained leave to go on shore, and completely succeeded in his object by being present at the capture of a whale. The monster, however, led them a considerable dance off to sea, and it was long after the time appointed for his return when the youth made his appearance, delightfully perfumed with blubber, and having a glorious tale to tell of his day's adventures.

This was voted by acclamation to be "something like an expedition;" and the youngster, of course, gained great credit for his spirit. I was one of another party, who, I suppose, being a little jealous of our companion's laurels, took the earliest opportunity of trying to signalise ourselves in a similar way. A large whale was seen one morning playing about the Leander, in Murray's anchorage, and, of course, far within the belt of reefs already described as fringing the roadstead on its eastern and northern sides. How this great fellow had got into such a scrape we could not conjecture. Possibly, in placing himself alongside one of the rugged coral ledges, to scrub off the incrustations of shell-fish which torment these monsters of the deep, he had gradually advanced too far; or, more probably, he may have set out in pursuit of some small fry, and, before he was aware of it, have threaded his way among this labyrinth of rocks, till escape was impossible. At all events, he now found himself in comparatively deep water, from eight to ten fathoms, without any visible means of retreat from his coral trap. All hands crowded into the rigging to see the whale *floundering* about; till at length some one proposed, rashly enough certainly, to pay him a visit in one of the ship's boats, with no better implements, offensive or defensive, than the ordinary boat-hooks. These are light poles, not unlike a shepherd's crook, with a spike and hook at the end; not bad things for fishing up a turtle when caught napping, but slender reeds, in all conscience, against a fish forty or fifty feet long!

Away we went, however, in our wild-goose whale-chase, without any precise idea as to what we were to do if we should come up with the game. As the great leviathan was approached, his aspect became more and more formidable; and it was necessary to think of some regular plan of attack, if any were to be made. As to defence, it may easily be imagined that was out of the question; for one gentle whisk of his tail might have sent the cutter and her crew, boat-hooks, oars, and all, spinning over the fore yard-arm of the flag-ship. All eyes being now upon us, it was agreed unanimously, after a pause, that we should run right on board of him, and take our chance. So we rowed forward; but the whale, whose back was then showing just above the water, like a ship keel upwards, perhaps not approving of our looks, or possibly not seeing us, slipped down, clean out of sight, leaving only a monstrous whirlpool of oily-looking water, in the vortex of which we continued whirling round for some time, like great ninnies as we were, and gaping about us. At this time, the boat lay not half a ship's length from the Leander; so that our disappointment caused considerable amusement on board, and the people came laughing down from the rigging, where they had been perched, to see the grand fight between the whale and the young gentlemen!

While we were lying on our oars, and somewhat puzzled what to do next, we beheld one of the most extraordinary sights in the world; at least I do not remember to have seen many things which have surprised me more, or made a deeper impression on my memory. Our friend the whale, probably finding the water disagreeably shallow (for, as I have said, it was not above fifty or sixty feet deep), or perhaps provoked at not being able to disentangle himself from the sharp coral reefs, or for some other reason of pleasure or of pain, suddenly made a spring out of the sea. So complete was this enormous leap, that for an instant he was seen fairly up in the air, in a horizontal position, at a distance from the surface not much short, I should think, of half his own breadth. His back, therefore, must have been at least twenty feet, in perpendicular height, over our heads. While in his progress upwards, there really appeared in his spring some touch of the vivacity which belongs to a trout or to a salmon shooting out of the water. The whale, however, fell back again on the sea, with all the clumsiness imaginable, like a huge log thrown on its broadside; and with such a thundering crash as made all hands stare in astonishment, making even the "boldest hold his breath for a time." Total demolition, indeed, must have been the inevitable fate of our party, had the whale taken his leap one minute sooner, for he would then have fallen plump on the boat! The waves caused by the explosion spread over half the anchorage! nor, if the Leander herself had blown up, could the effects have extended much further. As we rolled about in the cutter from side to side, we had time to balance the expediency of further proceedings against the tolerable chance of being smashed to atoms under the whale's belly at his next leap.

All idea of capturing him was now, of course, given up; if, indeed, any such frantic notion could ever seriously have entered our heads. But our curiosity was vehemently roused to witness such another feat; and, after lying on our oars for some time, we once more detected the whale's back at a little distance from us.

"Let us poke him up again!" cried one of the party.

"To be sure, let's board him!" roared out the others; and away we dashed, in hopes of producing a repetition of this singular exploit. The whale, however, did not choose to exhibit any more, though we often succeeded in coming very near him. At last he fairly bolted, and took the direction of the North Rock, hoping, perhaps, to make his escape by the narrow passage probably known only to the most experienced denizens of those intricate submarine regions.

It was not until after we had entirely lost sight of the chase, and when we had rowed so far we could just see the top of St. George's Island astern of us, that we had leisure to remark the change of weather which had taken place during this absurd pursuit. The sky had become overcast, and the wind risen to such a smart breeze from the south-west, that, when we again put the boat's head towards the island, it was quite as much as we could

do to make any head-way at all, and sometimes we hardly held our own. Had the wind increased a little more, we must inevitably have been blown to sea; even as it was, it cost us many hours of the severest tugging at the oars to regain the anchorage, just before night-fall, by which time the fishing-party were completely worn out.

I have not related this story of the whale's leap without considerable hesitation, the source of which distrust will be found, better than I can express it for myself, in the following anecdote, related to me by Sir Walter Scott; and I recommend it to the attention of travellers who have any thoughts of communicating to the public the marvels they have seen in distant lands.

It appears that Mungo Park, the first, and still, perhaps, the most interesting of African travellers, was in the habit of relating, in a quiet way, to his most confidential friends, many curious and highly amusing incidents, which had occurred to him during his celebrated journey in search of the Niger. To some of these anecdotes, however, no allusion even is made in his printed statements, while other incidents are inserted, not nearly so interesting as these rejected stories.

"How is this?" asked Sir Walter. "Why did not you put these things also into your book?"

"Oh," replied Park, "the case is simply this:—you know that I went to Africa for certain public purposes, being expressly required to investigate particular points; and it seemed of considerable consequence not only that these inquiries should be carefully made, but that a credible, as well as a faithful, account of the result should be rendered to the world."

"Very true," resumed his friend; "but as there is surely nothing which you have privately told us, in addition to what you have printed, but what is strictly true, while the suppressed stories are certainly very entertaining, why should you wantonly deprive your book of so much that would recommend it still more to general favour?"

"There is nothing wanton in what I have done," answered the traveller; "indeed, it is precisely because I believed it would have had no such good effect as you suppose, that I have kept out these matters. They might, indeed, have gained for the work a little more temporary popularity; but that was not what I desired. At all events, as I conceived, I had a still higher duty to perform. Being sent to execute a given service, I performed my task to the best of my ability; but on returning, I felt I had another obligation to attend to, not less binding, which was, to give such an account as, besides being strictly true, should carry with it such evidence of its own good faith as might insure every part of my narrative being credited. These stories, however, the omission of which you regret, and which I venture to tell you only because you have known me all my life, I have shrunk from repeating to the world, whose knowledge of my character is drawn from this book alone. In a word, I did not feel that I was at liberty to shake my own credit, or even to risk its being shaken, by relating anecdotes so much out of the ordinary line of events as some of these adventures are. As a servant of the public in the great field of discovery, I considered my character for veracity as part of their property, which was not to be trifled with, merely to make idle people laugh or stare a little more. And I feared, that even one doubtful point in such a work, no matter how small, or how true, might have weakened the authority of the whole; and this I did not choose to hazard."

After Park's death, and when a biographical sketch of this most amiable and persevering traveller was in the course of preparation, one of this circle of friends, of a very retentive memory for such things (even the Great Unknown himself), was applied to for these suppressed anecdotes, the existence of which had somehow or other transpired. After a moment's reflection, he said—

"No!—I won't repeat one word of them to you. If my friend Park, in his soberest and most reflecting moments, considered it proper to keep these things out of his book, and betrayed them even to his intimates only over a glass of toddy, I consider I should not be acting a generous part by his memory to publish them after he is gone, though I am convinced they are all quite true."

After preparing the above adventure of the whale's leap for the press, I felt, on Park's principle, a certain hesitation as to trusting it before the public; but in order to fortify myself by an authority of the highest rank in whaling matters, I wrote the following letter to my friend Captain Scoresby:—

"More than twenty-eight years ago, I saw a whale leap right out of the sea, in Murray's anchorage at Bermuda. The depth of water, if I recollect right, was about ten fathoms, and he had, somehow or other, got inside the barrier of coral reefs which gird these islands on the north. When the whale was at his greatest elevation, his back may have been twenty or thirty feet above the surface of the water, and at that moment he was in a horizontal position. His length could not have been less, I should imagine, than fifty or sixty feet. As I never saw such a thing before or since, I am a little afraid of relating it, and have no mind to risk my credit by telling a story too big to be swallowed by the average run of gullets, however true in point of fact. You will oblige me, therefore, very much, by telling me whether, in the course of your extensive experience, you have seen one or more such incidents. If not, I fear my story of the whale's jump at Bermuda must be kept out of a little work I am now preparing for the use of young folks. But if I have your authority to back me, the anecdote shall stand, and so take its chance for being valuable in the way of information."

To this I received the following reply from Captain Scoresby, who, as all the world will admit, is the highest authority on such questions:—

"*Liverpool, 25 August*, 1830.

* * * * *

"And now having come to the subject, which, I allow, is one of magnitude, I have much pleasure in being able to speak to the point, in attestation of the not infrequency of the exhibition of the huge leap which you witnessed, however ignorance might charge it as 'very like a whale.' Whilst engaged in the northern whale fishery, I witnessed many similar exploits of the whales in their frisks. Generally, they were of a middle size; but I think I have seen instances of full-

grown fish, of forty or fifty feet in length, forgetting their usual gravity, and making out these odd exhibitions of their whole form from head to tail. Certainly, I have several times seen whales leap so high out of the water as to be completely in air, which, reckoning from the surface of the back (the real extent of the leap), could scarcely be less than twenty feet, and possibly might be more. I have, at different times, gone in pursuit of these frolicsome fish; but in all cases they avoided either catastrophe—the leaping upon the boat, or allowing the boat to pull upon them.

"By the way, whilst the breathing of the whale has been magnified into a resemblance of waterworks, to the abuse of the credulous, the frolic feats of the leaping whales have been neglected as a source of interest. In referring to my account of the arctic regions, I perceive the fact is named, but with little commentary for general amusement *."

CHAPTER V.

MIDSHIPMEN'S PRANKS—HISTORY OF SHAKINGS.

During the long winters of our slothful discontent at Bermuda, caused by the Peace of Amiens, the grand resource, both of the idle and the busy, among all classes of the Leander's officers, was shooting—that never-ending, still-beginning amusement, which Englishmen carry to the remotest corners of the habitable globe—popping away in all countries, thinking only of the game, and often but too reckless of the prejudices or fears of the natives. This propensity is indulged even in those uninhabited regions of the earth which are visited only once in an age; and if Captain Parry had reached the Pole, he would unquestionably have had a shot at the axis of the earth!

In the mean time, the officers and the young gentlemen of the flag-ship at Bermuda, in the beginning of 1803, I suppose to keep their hands in for the war which they saw brewing, and hourly prayed for, were constantly blazing away among the cedar groves and orange plantations of those fairy islands, which appeared more and more beautiful after every such excursion. The mid shipmen were generally obliged to content themselves with knocking down the blue and the red birds with the ship's pistols, charged with His Majesty's gunpowder, and, for want of small shot, with slugs formed by cutting up His Majesty's musket-bullets. The officers aimed at higher game, and were, of course, better provided with guns and ammunition. Several of these gentlemen had brought from England some fine dogs—high-bred pointers; while the middies also, not to be outdone, must needs have a dog of their own: they recked very little of what breed; but some sort of animal they said they must have.

I forget how we procured the strange-looking beast whose services we contrived to engage; but, having once obtained him, we were not slow in giving him our best affections. It is true, he was as ugly as anything could possibly be. His colour was a dirty, reddish yellow; and while one part of his hair became knotted and twisted into curls, another portion hung down, quite straight, almost to the ground. He proved utterly useless for all the purposes of real sport, but was quite good enough to furnish the mids with plenty of fun when they went on shore—in chasing pigs, barking at old white-headed negresses, and other amusements, suited to the exalted taste and habits of the rising generation of officers.

People will differ about the merits of dogs; but we had no doubts as to the great superiority of ours over all the others on board, though the name we gave him certainly implied no such confidence on our part. After a full deliberation, it was decided to call him Shakings. Now, it must be explained that "shakings" is the name given to small fragments of rope-yarns, odds and ends of cordage, bits of oakum, old lanyards, in short, to any kind of refuse arising out of the wear and tear of the ropes. This odd name was perhaps bestowed on our beautiful favourite in consequence of his colour not being very dissimilar to that of well-tarred Russia-hemp; while the resemblance was daily increased by many a dab of pitch, which, in the hot weather, his rough coat imbibed from the seams between the planks of the deck.

If old Shakings was no great beauty, he was at least the most companionable of dogs; and though he dearly loved the midshipmen, and was dearly beloved by them in return, he had enough of the animal in his composition to take a still higher pleasure in the society of his own kind. So that, when the high-bred showy pointers belonging to the officers returned on board, after each shooting excursion, Mr. Shakings lost no time in applying to his fellow-dogs for the news. The pointers, who liked this sort of familiarity very well, gave poor Shakings all sorts of encouragement. Not so their masters, the officers, who could not bear to see "such an abominable cur," as they called our favourite, at once "so cursedly dirty and so utterly useless," mixing with their sleek and well-kept animals. At first their dislike was confined to such insulting expressions as the above; then it came to an occasional kick on the stern, or a knock on the nose with the butt-end of a fowling-piece; and lastly, to a sound cut across the rump with the hunting-whip.

Shakings, who instinctively knew his place, or, at all events, soon learned it, took all this, like a sensible fellow, in good part; while the mids, when out of hearing of the higher powers, uttered curses both loud and deep against the tyranny and oppression exercised towards an animal which, in their fond fancy, was declared to be worth all the showy dogs in the ward-room put together. They were little prepared, however, for the stroke which soon fell upon them, perhaps in consequence of these very murmurs—for bulkheads have ears as well as walls. To their great horror and indignation, one of the lieutenants, provoked at some liberty which Master Shakings had taken with his newly-polished boot, called out, one morning,—

"Man the jolly-boat, and land that infernal, dirty, ugly beast of a dog belonging to the young gentlemen!"

"Where shall I take him to, sir?" asked the strokesman of the boat.

"Oh, anywhere; pull to the nearest part of the

* For further information on this point, see Captain Scoresby's exceedingly curious and valuable account of the Whale Fishery in the Arctic Regions, vol. i. p. 467.

shore, and pitch him out on the rocks. He'll shift for himself, I have no doubt." So off went poor dear Shakings!

If a stranger had come into the midshipmen's berth at that moment, he might have thought His Majesty's naval service was about to be broken up. All allegiance, discipline, and subordination, seemed utterly cancelled by this horrible act. Many were the execrations hurled upwards at the offending "nobs," who, we declared, were combining to make our lives miserable. Some of our party voted for writing a letter of remonstrance to the Admiral against this unheard-of outrage; and one youth swore deeply that he would leave the service, unless justice were obtained. But as he had been known to swear the same thing half a-dozen times every week since he joined the ship, no great notice was taken of this pledge. Another declared, upon his word of honour, that such an act was enough to make a man turn Turk, and fly his country! At last, by general agreement, it was decided that we should not do a bit of duty, or even stir from our seats, till we obtained redress for our grievances.

While we were in the very act of vowing mutiny and disobedience, the hands were turned up to "furl sails!" upon which the whole party, totally forgetting their magnanimous resolution, scudded up the ladders, and jumped into their stations with more than usual alacrity, wisely thinking that the moment for actual revolt had not yet arrived.

A better scheme than throwing up the service, or writing to the Admiral, or turning Mussulman, was afterwards concocted. The midshipmen who went on shore in the next boat easily got hold of poor Shakings, who was howling on the steps of the watering-place. In order to conceal him, he was stuffed, neck and crop, into the captain's cloak-bag, brought safely on board, and restored once more to the bosom of his friends.

In spite of all we could do, however, to keep Master Shakings below, he presently found his way to the quarter-deck, to receive the congratulations of the other dogs. There he was soon detected by the higher powers, and very shortly afterwards trundled over the gangway, and again tossed on the beach. Upon this occasion he was honoured by the presence of one of his own masters, a middy, sent upon this express duty, who was specially desired "to land the brute, and not to bring him on board again." Of course, this particular youngster did not bring the dog off; but, before night, somehow or other, old Shakings was snoring away in grand chorus with his more fashionable friends the pointers, and dreaming no evil, before the door of the very officer's cabin whose beautifully-polished boots he had brushed by so rudely in the morning—an offence that had led to his banishment.

This second return of our dog was too much. The whole possé of us were sent for on to the quarter-deck, and in very distinct terms positively ordered not to bring Shakings on board again. These injunctions having been given, this wretched victim, as we termed him, of oppression, was once more landed amongst the cedar-groves. This time he remained a full week on shore; but how or when he found his way off again, no one ever knew; at least no one chose to divulge. Never was there anything like the mutual joy felt by Shakings and his two dozen masters at this meeting. He careered about the ship, barked and yelled with delight, and, in his raptures, actually leaped, with his dirty feet, on the milk-white duck trousers of the disgusted officers, who heartily wished him at the bottom of the anchorage! Thus the poor beast unwittingly contributed to accelerate his hapless fate, by this ill-timed show of confidence in those who were then plotting his ruin. If he had only kept his paws to himself, and staid quietly in the dark recesses of the cock-pit, wings, cable-tiers, and other wild regions, the secrets of which were known only to the inhabitants of our submarine world, all might yet have been well.

We had a grand jollification on the night of Shakings' restoration; and his health was in the very act of being drunk, with three times three, when the officer of the watch, hearing an uproar below, the sounds of which were conveyed distinctly up the windsail, sent down to put our lights out; and we were forced to march off, growling, to our hammocks.

Next day, to our surprise and horror, old Shakings was not to be seen or heard of. We searched everywhere, interrogated the coxswains of all the boats, and cross-questioned the marines who had been sentries during the night on the forecastle, gangways, and poop; but all in vain!—no trace of Shakings could be found.

At length, the idea began to gain ground among us that the poor beast had been put an end to by some diabolical means; and our ire mounted accordingly. This suspicion seemed the more natural, as the officers said not a word about the matter, nor even asked us what we had done with our dog. While we were in this state of excitement and distraction for our loss, one of the midshipmen, who had some drollery in his composition, gave a new turn to the expression of our thoughts.

This gentleman, who was more than twice as old as most of us, say about thirty, had won the affections of the whole of our class, by the gentleness of his manners, and the generous part he always took on our side. He bore among us the pet name of Daddy; and certainly he was as a father to those of us who, like myself, were quite adrift in the ship, without any one to look after them. He was a man of talents and classical education; but he had entered the Navy far too late in life ever to take to it cordially. His habits, indeed, had become so rigid, that they could never be made to bend to the mortifying kind of discipline which it appears essential every officer should run through, but which only the young and light-hearted can brook. Our worthy friend, accordingly, with all his abilities, taste, and acquirements, never seemed at home on board ship; and unless a man can reach this point of liking for the sea, he is better on shore. At all events, our old friend Daddy cared more about his books than about the blocks, and delighted much more in giving us assistance in our literary pursuits, and trying to teach us to be useful, than in rendering himself a proficient in those professional mysteries which he never hoped to practise in earnest himself.

What this very interesting person's early history

might have been, we never could find out; nor could we guess why he entered the Navy, nor conjecture how it came, that a man of his powers and accomplishments should have been kept back so long. Indeed, the youngsters never inquired too closely into these matters, being quite contented to have the advantage of his protection against the oppression of some of the other oldsters, who occasionally bullied them. In all cases of difficulty, we never failed to cluster round him, to tell our grievances, great and small, with the certainty of always finding in him that great desideratum in calamity—a patient and friendly listener.

It will easily be supposed, that our kind Daddy took more than usual interest in this affair of Shakings, and that he was applied to by us at every stage of the transaction. He felt, like us, sadly perplexed, when the dog was finally missing; and, for some days afterwards, he could afford us no comfort, nor suggest any mode of revenge which was not too dangerous for his young friends to put in practice. He prudently observed, that as we had no certainty to go upon, it would be foolish to get ourselves into a serious scrape for nothing at all.

"There can be no harm, however," he at last exclaimed, in his dry and slightly sarcastic way, which all who knew him will recollect as well as if they saw him now, drawing his hand slowly across his mouth and chin, "There can be no possible harm, my boys, in putting the other dogs in mourning for their dear departed friend Shakings; for, whatever is become of him, he is lost to them as well as to you, and his memory ought to be duly respected by his old masters."

This hint was no sooner given than a cry was raised for crape, and every chest and bag ransacked, to procure badges of mourning. Each of the pointers was speedily rigged up with a large bunch of black, tied in a handsome bow upon his left leg just above the knee. The joke took immediately, and even the officers could not help laughing; for, though we considered them little better than fiends at that moment of excitement, these gentlemen showed themselves (except in this instance) the best-natured and most indulgent persons I remember to have sailed with. They ordered the crape, however, to be instantly cut off from the dogs' legs; and one of the officers remarked to us, seriously, that "as we had now had our piece of fun out, there were to be no more such tricks."

Off we scampered, to consult old Daddy what was to be done next, as we had been positively ordered not to meddle any more with the dogs.

"Put the pigs in mourning!" he said.

All our crape had been expended by this time; but this want was soon supplied by men whose trade it is to discover resources in difficulty. With a generous devotion to the memory of the departed Shakings, one of these juvenile mutineers pulled off his black handkerchief, and, tearing it in pieces, gave a portion to each of the circle; and thus supplied, away we all started to put into practice this new suggestion of our director-general of mischief.

The row which ensued in the pig-sty was prodigious, for in those days hogs were allowed a place on board a man-of-war, a custom most wisely abolished of late years, since nothing can be more out of character with any ship than such nuisances. As these matters of taste and cleanliness were nothing to us, we intermitted not our noisy labour till every one of the grunters wore his armlet of such crape as we had been able to muster; then, watching our opportunity, we opened the door and let out the whole herd of swine on the main-deck, just at the moment when a group of the officers were standing on the fore part of the quarter-deck. Of course the liberated pigs, delighted with their freedom, passed in review under the very nose of our superiors, each with his mourning-knot displayed, grunting or squealing along, as if it was their express object to attract attention to their domestic sorrow for the loss of Shakings. The officers now became excessively provoked; for they could not help seeing that these proceedings were affording entertainment, at their expense, to the whole crew. The men, of course, took no part in this touch of insubordination; but they (like the middies) were ready enough, in those idle times of the weary, weary peace, to catch at any species of distraction or devilry, no matter what, to compensate for the loss of their wonted occupation of pommelling their enemies.

The matter, therefore, as a point of discipline, necessarily became rather serious; and the whole gang of young culprits being sent for on the quarter-deck, we were ranged in a line, each with his toes at the edge of a plank, according to the orthodox fashion of these gregarious scoldings, technically called "toe-the-line matches." We were then given to understand that our proceedings were impertinent, and, after the orders we had received, highly offensive. It was with much difficulty that either party could keep their countenances during this official lecture, for, while it was going on, the sailors were endeavouring, by the direction of the officers, to remove the bits of silk from the legs of the pigs. If, however, it be difficult—as most difficult we found it—to put a hog into mourning, it is a job ten times more troublesome to take him out again. Such at least is the fair inference from these two experiments, the only ones perhaps on record; for it cost half the morning to undo what we had effected in less than an hour; to say nothing of the unceasing and outrageous uproar which took place along the decks, especially under the guns, and even under the coppers, forward in the galley, where two or three of the youngest pigs had wedged themselves, apparently resolved to die rather than submit to the degradation of being deprived of their sable badges.

All this was very creditable to the memory of poor Shakings; but, in the course of the day, the real secret of this extraordinary difficulty of taking a pig out of mourning was discovered. Two of the mids were detected in the very fact of tying on a bit of black buntin to the leg of a sow, from which the seamen declared they had already cut off crape and silk enough to have made her a complete suit of black.

On these fresh offences being reported, the whole party of us were ordered to the mast-head as a punishment. Some were sent to sit on the top-mast cross-trees, some on the top-gallant yard-arms, and one small gentleman being perched at the jib-boom end, was very properly balanced abaft by another little culprit at the extremity of

the gaff. In this predicament we were hung out to dry for six or eight hours, as old Daddy remarked to us with a grin, when we were called down as the night fell.

Our persevering friend, being rather provoked at the punishment of his young flock, set seriously to work to discover the real fate of Shakings. It soon occurred to him, that if the dog had indeed been made away with, as he shrewdly suspected, the ship's butcher, in all probability, must have had a hand in his murder: accordingly, he sent for the man in the evening, when the following dialogue took place :—

"Well, butcher, will you have a glass of grog to-night?"

"Thank you, sir, thank you. Here's your honour's health!" said the other, after smoothing down his hair, and pulling an immense quid of tobacco out of his mouth.

Old Daddy observed the peculiar relish with which the rogue took his glass: and mixing another, a good deal more potent, placed it before the fellow. He then continued the conversation in these words:

"I tell you what it is, Mr. Butcher—you are as humane a man as any in the ship, I dare say; but if required, you know well that you must do your duty, whether it is upon sheep or hogs?"

"Surely, sir."

"Or upon dogs, either?" suddenly asked the inquisitor.

"I don't know about that," stammered the butcher, quite taken by surprise, and thrown all aback.

"Well—well," said Daddy, "here's another glass for you—a stiff north-wester. Come! tell us all about it now. How did you get rid of the dog?—of Shakings, I mean."

"Why, sir," said the peaching scoundrel, "I put him in a bag—a bread-bag, sir."

"Well!—what then?"

"I tied up the mouth, and put him overboard, out of the midship lower-deck port, sir."

"Yes—but he would not sink!" said Daddy.

"Oh, sir," cried the fellow, now entering fully into the merciless spirit of his trade, "I put a four-and-twenty pound shot into the bag along with Shakings."

"Did you!—Then, Master Butcher, all I can say, is, you are as precious a rascal as ever went about unhanged. There—drink your grog, and be off with you!"

Next morning when the officers were assembling at breakfast in the ward-room, the door of the captain of marines' cabin was suddenly opened, and that officer, half-shaved, and laughing through a collar of soap-suds, stalked out with a paper in his hand.

"Here," he exclaimed, "is a copy of verses, which I found just now in my basin. I can't tell how they got there, nor what they are about; but you shall judge."

So he read aloud the two following stanzas of doggerel:

"When the Northern Confederacy threatened our shores,
And roused Albion's Lion, reclining to sleep,
Preservation was taken of all the King's Stores,
Nor so much as a *Rope Yarn* was launched in the deep.

"But now it is Peace, other hopes are in view,
And all active service as light as a feather,
The Stores may be d—d, and humanity too,
For SHAKINGS and *Shot* are thrown o'erboard together!"

I need hardly say in what quarter of the ship this biting morsel of cock-pit satire was concocted, nor indeed who wrote it, for there was no one but our good Daddy who was equal to such a flight. About midnight, an urchin—who shall be nameless—was thrust out of one of the after-ports of the lower deck, from which he clambered up to the marine officer's port, and the sash happening to have been lowered down on the gun, the epigram, copied by another of the youngsters, was pitched into the soldier's basin.

The wisest thing would have been for the officers to have said nothing about the matter, and let it blow by. But as angry people are seldom judicious, they made a formal complaint to the captain, who, to do him justice, was not a little puzzled how to settle the affair. The reputed author, however, was called up, and the captain said to him—

"Pray, sir, are you the writer of these lines?"

"I am, sir," he replied, after a little consideration.

"Then, all I can say is," remarked the captain, "they are clever enough, in their way; but take my advice, and write no more such verses."

So the matter ended. The satirist took the captain's hint in good part, and confined his pen to topics less repugnant to discipline.

In the course of a few months the war broke out, and there was no longer time for such nonsense; indeed our generous protector Daddy, some time after this affair of Shakings took place, was sent off to Halifax, in charge of a prize. His orders were, if possible, to rejoin his own ship, the Leander, then lying at the entrance of New York harbour, just within Sandy Hook light-house.

Our good old friend, accordingly, having completed his mission, and delivered up his charge to the authorities at Halifax, took his passage in the British packet sailing from thence to the port in which we lay. As this ship sailed past us, on her way to the city of New York, we ascertained, to our great joy, that our excellent Daddy was actually on board of her. Some hours afterwards, the pilot-boat was seen coming to us, and, though it was in the middle of the night, all the younger mids came hastily on deck to welcome their worthy messmate back again to his home.

It was late in October, and the wind blew fresh from the north-westward, so that the ship, riding to the ebb, had her head directed towards the Narrows, between Staten Land and Long Island: consequently, the pilot-boat (one of those beautiful vessels so well known to every visitor of the American coast) came flying down upon us with the wind nearly right aft. Our joyous party were all assembled on the quarter-deck, looking anxiously at the boat as she swept past. She then luffed round, in order to sheer alongside, at which moment the main-sail jibed, as was to be expected. It was obvious, however, that something more had taken place than the pilot had anticipated, since the boat, instead of ranging up to the gangway, being brought right round on her heel, went

off upon a wind on the other tack. The tide carried her out of sight for a few minutes, but she was soon again alongside: when we learned, to our inexpressible grief and consternation, that on the main-boom of the pilot-boat swinging over, it had accidentally struck our poor friend, and pitched him headlong overboard. Being encumbered with his great-coat, the pockets of which, as we afterwards heard, were loaded with his young companions' letters, brought from England by this packet, he in vain struggled to catch hold of the boat, and then sunk to rise no more!

CHAPTER VI.

DIVERSITIES IN DISCIPLINE.

It was our lot in the Leander to change captains very frequently; and, as most of the plans of those officers were dissimilar, the perplexity which such variations produced is not to be described. Fortunately, however, there is so much uniformity in the routine of naval discipline, that, in spite of any variety in the systems established by a succession of commanding-officers, things do somehow contrive to run on to their final purpose pretty well. It is true the interests of the service often suffer for a while, and in a small degree; but public-spirited and vigilant officers know well how to extract lasting profit even from the unsettled, revolutionary state of affairs which is apt to occur at these periods. On the other hand, it is at these times especially that the class called skulkers most easily shirk their duty, while those who really like their business are still more certain of being favourably noticed—or, at all events, of making their utility felt, than at any other moment; it being then obvious that, without them, things could not go on at all. Although the variety of methods, therefore, introduced by different captains in succession is apt to distract and unhinge the discipline, it certainly teaches much that is useful to those who are on the alert, and who wish to improve.

I was too young and inexperienced, at that time, to profit by these repeated changes, as I might have done had I been duly aware that so many advantages may be found in observing their effects. And it is chiefly on this account that I now mention the circumstance, in order to recommend young men to avoid the very common practice, on board ship, of despising, in such sweeping style, all the plans introduced by the new officer, and lauding to the skies the practices of the captain who has been superseded. It is not such an easy affair as they suppose, let me tell them, to regulate the internal affairs of a ship: and, however clever young fellows may fancy themselves, they will find their best interest in trying, upon these occasions, not so much to detect points of censure, as to discover, and impress on their memory, topics of practical utility, hints for the solution of future difficulties, and methods of turning their own resources to professional account when their turn comes to command.

Even at this distance of time, when most of the officers I am speaking of have long since been dead and gone, I still feel that it would be a sort of disrespectful liberty in me, and perhaps not very useful, to point out, with any minuteness of detail, those peculiarities in their several modes of management which struck me as being faulty at the time, or which now seem worthy of commendation. I shall merely mention one important trait of character by which two captains were contradistinguished from each other; and I do so the more readily, as the example seems to contain a lesson nearly as applicable to military, and even domestic matters, as it is to those of a stern profession like the Navy.

Whenever one of these commanding-officers came on board the ship, after an absence of a day or two, and likewise when he made his periodical round of the decks after breakfast, his constant habit was to cast his eye about him, in order to discover what was wrong—to detect the smallest thing that was out of its place—in a word, to find as many grounds for censure as possible. As this constituted, in his opinion, the best preventive to neglect, on the part of those under his command, he acted thus crustily on principle.

The attention of the other officer, on the contrary, appeared to be directed chiefly to those points of which he could approve. For instance, he would stop as he went along, from time to time, and say to the first lieutenant, "Now, these ropes are very nicely arranged; this mode of stowing the men's bags and mess-kids is just as I wish to see." While the officer first described would not only pass by these well-arranged things, which had cost hours of labour to put in order, quite unnoticed, but seemed never to be easy till his eye had caught hold of some casual omission, affording an opening for disapprobation. The approving captain would remark to the first lieutenant, as he walked along, "How white and clean you have made the decks to-day! I think you must have been at them all the morning, to have got them into such order." The fault-finder, in similar circumstances, but eager to blame, would say, even if the decks were as white and clean as drifted snow, "I wish to Heaven, sir, you would teach these sweepers to clear away that bundle of shakings!" pointing to a bit of rope-yarn, not half an inch long, left under the truck of a gun.

It seemed, in short, as if nothing was more vexatious to one of these officers, than to discover things so correct as to afford him no good opportunity for finding fault; while to the other, the necessity of censuring really appeared a punishment to himself. Under the one, accordingly, we all worked with cheerfulness, from a conviction that nothing we did in a proper way would miss approbation. But our duty under the other, being performed in fear, seldom went on with much spirit. We had no personal satisfaction in doing things correctly, from the certainty of getting no commendation. The great chance, also, of being censured, even in those cases where we had laboured most industriously to merit approbation, weakened the spring of all generous exertion, and, by teaching us to anticipate blame as a matter of course, defeated the very purpose of punishment when it fell upon us. The case being quite hopeless, the chastisement seldom conduced either to the amendment of an offender, or to the prevention of offences. But what seemed the oddest thing of all was, that these men were both as kind-hearted as could be, or if there were any difference, the

fault-finder was the better natured, and in matters not professional the more indulgent of the two. The line of conduct I have described was purely a matter of official system, not at all of feeling. Yet, as it then appeared, and still appears to me, nothing could be more completely erroneous than the snarling method of the one, or more decidedly calculated to do good than the approving style of the other. It has, in fact, always seemed to me an absurdity, to make any real distinction between public and private matters in these respects. Nor is there the smallest reason why the same principle of civility, or consideration, or by whatever name that quality be called by which the feelings of others are consulted, should not modify professional intercourse quite as much as it does that of the freest society, without any risk that the requisite strictness of discipline would be hurt by an attention to good manners.

This desire of discovering that things are right, accompanied by a sincere wish to express that approbation, are habits which, in almost every situation in life, have the best possible effects in practice. They are vastly more agreeable certainly to the superior himself, whether he be the colonel of a regiment, the captain of a ship, or the head of a house; for the mere act of approving seldom fails to put a man's thoughts into that pleasant train which predisposes him to be habitually pleased, and this frame of mind alone essentially helps the propagation of a similar cheerfulness among all those who are about him. It requires, indeed, but a very little experience of soldiers or sailors, children, servants, or any other kind of dependants, or even of companions and superiors, to show that this good-humour, on the part of those whom we wish to influence, is the best possible coadjutor to our schemes of management, whatever these may be.

On the other hand, the approving system is also, beyond all others, the most stimulating and agreeable for the inferior to work under. Instead of depressing and humiliating him, it has a constant tendency to make him think well of himself, so long as he is usefully employed; and as soon as this point is gained, but seldom before, he will be in a right frame of mind to think well of others, and to look with hearty zeal to the execution of his duty. All the burdens of labour are then lightened, by the conviction that they are well directed; and his severest tasks, instead of being distasteful and wearisome, may often, under the cheering eye of a superior who shows himself anxious to commend what is right, become the most substantial pleasures of his life.

I need scarcely dwell longer on this subject, by showing that another material advantage of the approving practice, when reduced to a habit, consists in the greater certainty and better quality of the work done by willing hands, compared to that which is crushed out of people by force. No man understood this distinction better than Lord Nelson, who acted upon it uniformly, and with what wonderful success we all know. Some person was discussing this question with him one day, and pointing out the eminent success which had attended the opposite plan, followed by another great officer, Lord St. Vincent:—

"Very true," said Lord Nelson; "but, in cases where he used a hatchet, I took a pen-knife."

After all, however, it is undeniable, that, adopt what course we will of commendations or other rewards, we must still call in punishments to our assistance, from time to time. But there can be little doubt that any well-regulated system of cheerfulness, and just approbation of what is right, followed not from caprice, but as an express duty, gives into our hands the means of correcting things which are wrong, with greater effect, and at a much less cost of suffering, than if our general habit were that of always finding fault. For it is obvious, that when affairs are carried on upon the cheerful principle above described, the mere act of withholding praise becomes a sharp censure in itself, and this alone is sufficient to recommend its use. It doubles the work done, by quickening the hands of the labourers; it doubles the happiness of all parties, both high and low: and it may also be said to double our means of punishing with effect, by superadding a class of chastisements, dependent solely upon the discontinuance of favours, rather than the infliction of actual pain.

The practical application of these rules to the ordinary course of naval discipline I shall probably have frequent opportunities of showing. In the mean time, I shall merely remark, that in every situation in life, perhaps without any exception, much of our happiness or misery, as well as much of our success in the world, depends less upon external circumstances, than upon the manner in which, as a matter of habit and principle, we choose to view them in our own minds. In almost every case there is something to approve of, quite as distinct, if we wish to see it, as there is of censure, though it may not otherwise be so conspicuous. It will, of course, very often become necessary to reprobate, without any sort of qualification, what passes before us; still, without in the smallest degree compromising our sense of what is wrong, there will always be a way, if there be a will, of expressing such sentiments as shall not be unsuitable to the golden precept which recommends us to take a cheerful view of all things.

There is one practical maxim, trite, indeed, though too little acted upon, but which bears so directly on this subject, that I wish exceedingly to urge it upon the notice of my young friends, from its being calculated to prove of much use to them in the active business, as well as in the mere pleasures of life. In dealing with other men, no matter what their rank or station may be, we should not consider so much what they deserve at our hands, as what course is most suitable for us to follow.

"My lord," says Polonius to Hamlet, in speaking of the poor players, "I will use them according to their desert."

"Odd's bodikin, man, much better!" is the prompt answer of the judicious and kind-hearted prince. "Use every man after his desert, and who shall 'scape whipping? Use them after your own honour and dignity: the less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty."

Most people, however, reversing this beautiful maxim, which breathes the very soul of practical charity, forget what is due to themselves, and study to behave to others in a manner suitable to the desert of those persons, while they seem to leave out of the question entirely the propriety and dignity of their own conduct, as if that were a

minor, and not the primary consideration! Does not this necessarily occur every time we lose our temper!

These maxims apply with peculiar force on board ship, where the character and conduct of every officer are daily and hourly exposed to the searching scrutiny of a great number of persons, who have often little else to do but watch the behaviour of one another. But it may safely be asserted as a general truth, that in no instance whatsoever can we exercise any permanent or useful influence over the opinions, feelings, or conduct of others, unless in our intercourse with them we demean ourselves in a manner suitable to our own station. It *is this*, in fact, which, in the long-run, becomes the measure of all efficient authority, and is also the principal circumstance that gives one officer the ascendency over another, his equal in talents and information, and whose opportunities are alike. Probably also, it is to the same class of things that one man owes his transcendent popularity and success in society, while another, equally gifted, and enjoying similar opportunities, is shunned or neglected. If we hear a person constantly finding fault, however much reason he may occasionally have on his side, we soon cease to take any pleasure in his company; for we discover, that if there be two things presented to his view, one which may be made the subject of praise, the other of censure, he will be certain to catch at the disagreeable point, and dwell upon it, to the surly exclusion of that which is agreeable, although the circumstances may not be such as to have required him to express any comparative opinion at all. And as the taste for finding fault unfortunately extends to everything, small as well as great, constant food is sure to be furnished, at every turn, to supply this disparaging appetite. If the sky be bright and clear, the growler reminds you that the streets are dirty under foot; if the company be well selected, the dinner good, the music choice, and all things gay and cheerful, he forces upon your attention the closeness of the rooms, the awkward dress of some of the party, or the want of tune in one of the strings of the harp. In speaking of the qualities of a friend, your true snarler is certain to pick out the faults, to dash the merits; and even when talking of himself, he dwells with a morbid pleasure on his want of success in society, his losses in fortune, and his scanty hopes of doing any better in future. The glorious sunshine of day is pale moonlight to such a man. If he sees a Sir Joshua, it is sure to be faded; the composition and execution he takes care not to look at; or if the colouring be beautiful, then it is out of drawing! When he hears of a great warrior or statesman, whose exploits have won the applause of the whole world, he dashes our admiration by reference to some early failure. In short, whenever we find ourselves in such a person's company, we feel certain that the bad side of everything will inevitably be exposed to us. And what is the result? Do we not shun him? And if we should have the means of introducing him to others, or of putting him into a situation to benefit himself and the public, are we not shy of trusting him with a degree of power which he appears determined shall not be productive of good?

The truth is, that by an involuntary process of the mind, we come to judge of others, not nearly so much by direct examination as by means of the reflected light sent back from the objects surrounding them. If we observe, therefore, that a man's general taste is to find fault rather than to be pleased, we inevitably form the conclusion that he is really not worth pleasing; and as he is not more likely to gratify others than he has ourselves, we keep him, as much as we can, out of the way of those we esteem.

In very many cases, however, probably in most cases, this temper is merely a habit, and may often, at bottom, be quite unsuitable to the real character. So much so, that if the opposite practice, from whatever motive, be adopted by the same person, even where the disposition is not fundamentally good, the result may prove to be a thousand times more amiable and useful, not only to the party himself, but to all those with whom he has any dealings; for his companionship will then be eagerly courted, instead of being shunned, as before.

In the free and open world of busy life, men are generally made so fully sensible, sooner or later, of the truth of these maxims, that few of the growling tribe are ever known to advance far in life. On board ship, where the distinctions of rank are strongly marked, and the measure of each man's authority exactly determined by established laws and usages, officers are frequently much too slow to discover that the principles above adverted to are applicable to their own case; and thus they sometimes fling away advantages of the highest price, which lie easily within their reach, and adopt, in their stead, the cold, stern, and often inefficient operations of mere technical discipline.

This very technical discipline, indeed, like any other machinery, is admirable if well worked, but useless if its powers are misapplied. It is not the elastic force of the steam alone that gives impulse to the engine, but a due regulation of that elasticity. So it is with the use of that mysterious, I had almost said magical, sort of power, by which the operations of moral discipline are carried on, especially at sea, where the different component parts of the machine are so closely fitted to one another, and made to act in such uniform order, that no one part can go far wrong without deranging the whole.

In concluding this slight sketch of a most important topic, I would fain avoid narrowing these principles to any walk of life, though their operation may perhaps be more obvious afloat than on shore. And any young person, just setting out in the world, whatever his profession be, will do well to recollect, that his own eventual success, as well as much of his happiness in the mean time, will mainly depend upon his resolutely determining to acquire the habit of being pleased with everything he encounters, rather than of being sharp-sighted in discovering what is disagreeable. I may also add, that there appears to be little or no danger that the habit recommended will degenerate into duplicity; for, in order to its being either useful in the long-run, or agreeable at the moment, its practice, like everything else that is good in itself, must be guided throughout by sterling religious principle, and not merely by rule, or by feeling, still less, by any selfish considerations.

CHAPTER VII.

GEOLOGY'—NAUTICAL SQUABBLES.

About this period I began to dabble a little in geology, for which science I had acquired a taste by inheritance, and, in some degree, from companionship with more than one of the Scottish school, who, at the beginning of this century, were considered more than half-cracked, merely for supporting the igneous theory of Dr. Hutton, which, with certain limitations and extensions, and after thirty years of controversy, experiment, and observation, appears to be now universally generally adopted. Sailors, indeed, have excellent opportunities of making geological observations; for they have the advantage of seeing nature, as it were, with her face washed, more frequently than most other observers; and can seldom visit any coast, new or old, without having it in their power to bring off something interesting to inquirers in this branch of knowledge. That is, supposing they have eyes to see, and capacity to describe, what meets their observation. Some people cannot go beyond a single fact or two actually lying under their very noses; and you might as well expect them to fly as to combine these particulars, or to apply them to the purposes of science at large. Others, again, from the same want of accurate comprehension, or from sheer mental indolence, jump at once from the most trifling local circumstances to the broadest and most unwarranted generalisations.

It would be difficult, if not quite impossible, by dint of any number of precepts, to drive geology, or any other kind of instruction, into the noddles of some folks: so that it will often seem an even chance, with a blockhead, whether, when he is obliged to think, he will generalise too much or too little. I remember, for example, once lying at anchor, for some weeks, in the harbour of Vigo, on the west coast of Spain, during which time, for a piece of fun, the first lieutenant desired one of the youngsters, who was a sad loggerhead, to write a letter to his friends at home.

"What in the world, sir, am I to say?" asked the noodle of a fellow, after pondering over the subject for a long time.

"Say?—Why, describe the country, and the manners of the people—tell how they behave to you."

To work went the youth, sorely bothered; and though he had been on shore many times, he could extract nothing from his memory. The first lieutenant, however, who was inexorable, insisted upon the letter being written, and locked the youth up in one of the cabins till he intimated, by a certain signal, that the epistle was ready for inspection. The following was the result of four hours' painful labour:—

"Dear Mama,—All Spain is hilly—so is this. The natives all wear wooden shoes, and they are all a set of brutes, of which I take this to witness, that one of them called me a Picaroon.

"I remain," &c.

Although geology be a topic often intensely interesting on the spot, it is not always easy to give it this character to people at a distance, who care very little whether the world has been baked or boiled, or both, or neither. Most persons, indeed, remain all their lives quite indifferent whether the globe has come into its present shape by what is called Chance, that is, I suppose, by means which we cannot investigate, and can only guess at; or whether its various changes are susceptible of philosophical examination, and their history of being recorded with more or less precision. The sound geologist of the present day, it will be observed, professes to have nothing to do with the origin of things, but merely investigates the various physical revolutions which have taken place on the earth's surface, by the instrumentality of natural causes. The great charm of this fascinating science, accordingly, though it may be difficult to say why, consists in the manner in which the Reason, acting on obvious matters of fact, and the Imagination, which supplies what is unseen, are brought together, in regions where two such travellers could hardly have been expected to meet.

Many practical and popular questions also mingle themselves up with the scientific inquiries of geology. I remember, for instance, even when a boy, taking a great interest, on this account, in the plaster of Paris quarries of Nova Scotia. This formation shows itself generally above ground, and is of a dingy white colour, the parts exposed to the air being crumbly or decomposed. The workmen, having removed the superincumbent earth, and the rotten rock, as they call it, blast the solid gypsum with gunpowder, and, having broken it into blocks sufficiently small to be handled, sell it to the American dealers. A number of vessels are daily employed in carrying it to New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore. In my early notes I find it gravely stated, as a thing generally understood, that most of this gypsum was sold to the millers in the United States, for the purpose of adulterating their flour! Prejudice apart, however, the fact is quite the reverse of what I believed in my youth; for, by an ingenious system of regulations, the Americans contrive that the best quality should have an advantage over bad in leaving the country. Such, indeed, is the success of these measures, that I can safely say I never saw a barrel of American flour that was not excellent.

Besides this capital flour, the Americans export biscuit of a delicious quality to all parts of the globe; and those only who have known the amount of discomfort produced by living on the "remainder biscuit after a voyage," perhaps not good of its kind originally, can justly appreciate the luxury of opening a barrel of "crackers" from New York! By the way, it is a curious and not unimportant fact in nautical affairs, though only discovered of late years, that the best way to keep bread for a long time perfectly fresh is to exclude the air from it as much as possible. In former times, and even for some years after I entered the Navy, the practice was, to open the bread-room frequently, and, by means of funnels made of canvas, called windsails, to force the external air among the biscuit, in order, as was supposed, to keep it sweet, and to prevent decay. Nothing, it now appears, could have been devised more destructive to it; and the reason is easily explained. It is only in fine weather that this ventilating operation can be performed, at which seasons the external air is generally many degrees hotter than the atmosphere of

the bread-room, which, from being low down in the ship, acquires, like a cellar, a pretty uniform temperature. The outer air, from its warmth, and from sweeping along the surface of the sea, is at all times charged with a considerable degree of vapour, the moisture of which is instantly deposited upon any body it comes in contact with, colder than the air which bears it along. Consequently, the biscuit, when exposed to these humid currents, is rendered damp, and the process of decay, instead of being retarded, is rapidly assisted by the ventilation. This ancient system of airing is now so entirely exploded, that in some ships the biscuit is placed in separate closed cases, where it is carefully packed like slates, and the covers are then caulked or sealed down. By this contrivance no more biscuit need be exposed than is absolutely necessary for the immediate consumption of the crew. To keep the bread, and all other dry provisions, in the iron tanks used for the water, would be of the greatest advantage to the public service.

I remember once, when sailing in the Pacific Ocean, about a couple of hundred leagues to the south of the coast of Peru, falling in with a ship, and buying some American biscuit which had been more than a year from home. It was enclosed in a new wine puncheon, which was, of course, perfectly air-tight. When we opened it, the biscuit smelled as fresh and new as if it had been taken from the oven only the day before. Even its flavour and crispness were preserved so entire, that I thought we should never have done cranching it.

We were not particularly fortunate in making many captures on the Halifax station, in our early cruises, after the war broke out. But the change which the renewal of hostilities caused in our habits was great. Instead of idly rotting in harbour, our ship continued for the greater part of the year at sea, on the look-out,—a degree of vigilance, which, as will be seen, had its reward in due season. In the mean time, we discovered that a midshipman's life was full of interest and curiosity, especially to those who thirsted to see new countries and new climates. Of this matter of climate I find a characteristic touch in one of my early letters.

"We have been on a cruise for many months; but we did not take a single prize, although all the rest of the ships of the station have been making captures. I hope we shall be more fortunate next time, as we intend to go to a better place. Our last cruise carried us a long way to the southward, where the weather was so very hot, that it became impossible to do anything in comfort, night or day. In the night-time we could hardly sleep, and in the day we were scorched by the sun. When our candles were lighted, they melted away by degrees, and often tumbled on the table by their own weight, or, perhaps, fell plump into the victuals!"

Even at this distance of time, I have a most painfully distinct recollection of these dirty tallow candles in the midshipmen's berth; dips, I think they were called, smelling of mutton fat, and throwing up a column of smoke like that from a steamboat's chimney. These "glims" yielded but little light, by reason, possibly, of a huge wick occupying more than half the area of the flame, and demanding the incessant application of a huge big-bellied pair of snuffers to make the darkness visible.

This, in its turn, reminds me of a piece of cockpit manners, which truth obliges me to divulge, although confessedly not very much to our credit. It was the duty of the unfortunate wight who sat nearest the candle, grievously misnamed the "light," to snuff off its monstrous cauliflower of a head from time to time; and certainly his office was no sinecure. Sometimes, however, either from being *too* much absorbed in his book, or from his hand being tired, he might forget to "top the glim," as it was called, (glim being, I suppose, a contraction of the too obvious word glimmer.) On these occasions of neglect, when things were returning fast to their primeval darkness, any one of the company was entitled to call out "Top!" upon which all the rest were bound to vociferate the same word, and he who was the last to call out "Top!" exposed himself to one of the following disagreeable alternatives: he was required either to get up and snuff the candle, at whatever distance he might be seated from it; or, in the event of his declining this office, to have the burning snuff thrown in his face by any one who was within reach, and chose to pinch it off with his finger and thumb. It is true there was always some trouble in this operation, and some little risk of burning the fingers, to say nothing of the danger to His Majesty's ship; but the delightful task of teaching a messmate good-breeding by tossing a handful of burning tallow-candle snuff in his eyes, was, of course, a happiness too great to be resisted.

In speaking thus of the midshipmen's berth, and of their occasional ruggedness of manners, I should be doing wrong to leave an impression that they were a mere lawless set of harum-scarum scamps. Quite the contrary: for we had a code of laws for our government, which, for precision and distinctness of purpose, might have rivalled many of those promulgated by the newest-born states of the world, in these teeming days of political parturition. I observe, indeed, that young countries, like young people, whether in a midshipman's mess, or anywhere else, delight in the indulgence of the fond and false idea, that it is easy to regulate the fluctuations of human nature exactly as they please, by the mere force of written constitutions. They always "remember to forget," that institutions, to be in the smallest degree effective in practice, must be made to fit the existing state of society, and that society cannot possibly be made to fit them. They almost all run away with the vainest of vain notions, that established habits, old prejudices, with all the other fixed and peculiar circumstances of the time and place in which they find themselves, have become, of a sudden, so pliable, that they can be essentially and speedily modified by artificial legislation alone!

On this fallacious principle we framed a set of regulations for our mess, of which I recollect only one, giving, I admit, rather a queer idea of the state of things in our maritime world. It ran thus:—"If any member of the larboard mess shall so far forget the manners of a gentleman as to give the lie direct to one of his messmates, he shall be fined one dollar."

This fine, it must be observed, was intended purely as a propitiation to the offended dignity of

the mess, and was quite independent of the personal arrangements which, on such occasions, generally took place in the cock-pit outside. These battles-royal were fought across a chest; I do not mean with pistols, but with good honest fisty-cuffs. The only difficulty attending this method of settling such matters consisted in the shifts to which the parties were compelled to resort, to conceal the black eyes which, in most cases, were the result of these single combats. It would, of course, have been quite incorrect in the commanding officer to have overlooked such proceedings, even supposing the parties to retain a sufficiency of optics to do their duty. The usual resource was to trust to the good-nature of the surgeon, who put the high contending parties on the sick-list, and wrote against their names "Contusion;" an entry he might certainly make with a safe conscience!

This innocent way of settling disputes is all very well, so long as the mids are really and truly boys; but there comes, in process of time, a plaguy awkward age, when they begin to fancy themselves men, and when they are very apt to take it into their heads that, on such occasions as the one just alluded to, their dignity as officers and gentlemen will be compromised by beating each other about the face and eyes across a chest, and otherwise contusing one another, according to the most approved fashion of the cock-pit. Youths, at this intermediate age, are called Hobbledehoys, that is, neither man nor boy. And as powder and ball act with equal efficacy against these high-spirited fellows as against men of more experience, fatal duels do sometimes take place even among midshipmen. I was once present at a very foolish affair of this kind, which, though it happily ended in smoke, was so exceedingly irregular in all its parts, that, had any one fallen, the whole party concerned would most probably have been hanged!

A dispute arose between three of these young men, so to call them, in the course of which terms were bandied about, leaving a reproach such as only the ordeal of a duel, it was thought, could wipe out. It was late in the day when this quarrel took place; but as there was still light enough left to fire a shot, the party went on deck, and quietly asked leave to go on shore for a walk. I happened to be the only person in the berth at the time who was not engaged in the squabble, and so was pressed into the service of the disputants to act as second. There would have been nothing very absurd in all this, had there been another second besides me, or had there existed only one quarrel to settle; but between the three youths there were two distinct disputes!

One of these lads, whom we shall call Mr. A, had first to fight with Mr. B, while Mr. C was second to Mr. B; and then Mr. A, having disposed of Mr. B, either by putting him out of the world, or by adjusting the matter by apologies, was to commence a fresh battle with Mr. C, who, it will be observed, had been second to his former antagonist, Mr. B! The contingency of Mr. A himself being put "hors de combat" appears not to have been contemplated; but the strong personal interest which Mr. C (the second to Mr. A's first antagonist) had in giving the affair a fatal turn, would have been the ticklish point for our necks, in a court of justice, had Mr. A fallen. Poor fellow! he was afterwards killed in action. The other two, after rising to the rank of Captain, and to the command of frigates, died on service—victims of climate.

More by good luck than good management, neither of the first shots took effect. At this stage of the affair, I began to perceive the excessive absurdity of the whole transaction, and the danger of the gallows, to which we were all exposing ourselves. I therefore vehemently urged upon the parties the propriety of staying further proceedings. These suggestions were fortunately strengthened by the arrival of a corporal's guard of armed marines from the ship, under the orders of an officer, who was directed to arrest the whole party. There was at first a ludicrous show of actual resistance to this detachment; but, after some words, the affair terminated, and the disputants walked off the field arm-in-arm, the best friends in the world!

CHAPTER VIII.

MAST-HEADING A YOUNG GENTLEMAN.

On the 8th of January, 1804, we sailed from Halifax in the Leander, and, after a long and tedious passage, arrived at Bermuda. The transition from the intense frost of a Nova Scotian winter, during which the mercury stood generally below zero, to a temperature of 70° or 80°, was exceedingly agreeable to those who had constitutions to stand a sudden rise of more than half a hundred degrees of the thermometer. After a few days' stay at Bermuda, we set off for the United States, where we were again frozen, almost as much as we had been at Halifax. The first land we made was that of Virginia; but owing to calms, and light foul winds, we failed in getting to Norfolk in the Chesapeake, and therefore bore up for New York, which we reached on the 19th of February, and there anchored about seven miles from that beautiful city.

It was not thought right to let any of us young folks visit the shore alone; but I was fortunate in being invited to accompany one of the officers. To the friendship of this most excellent person, at the seasons of most need, I feel so much more indebted than I can venture to express without indelicacy, that I shall say nothing of the gratitude I have so long borne him in return. Perhaps, indeed, the best, as being the most practical, repayment we can ever make for such attentions is to turn them over, again and again, to some other person similarly circumstanced with ourselves at those early periods. This would be acting in the spirit with which Dr. Franklin tells us he used to lend money, which he never gave away without requiring a promise from the person receiving assistance to repay the loan, not to himself, but to transfer it, when times improved, to some one else in distress, who would enter into the same sort of engagement to circulate the charity. On this principle, I have several times, in the course of my professional life, rather surprised young middies by giving them exactly such a lift as I myself received at New York, showing them strange places, and introducing them to the inhabitants, in the way my kind friend adopted towards me. These boys may perhaps have fancied it was owing to their uncommon merit that they were so noticed; while all the time I may have merely been relieving my

own conscience, and paying off, by indirect instalments, a portion of that debt of gratitude which, in spite of these disbursements, I find only increases in proportion as my knowledge of the world gives me the means of appreciating its value.

That it is the time and manner of doing a kindness which constitute its chief merit, as a matter of feeling at least, is quite true; and the grand secret of this delicate art appears to consist in obliging people just at the moment, and, as nearly as possible, in the particular way, in which they themselves wish the favour to be done. However perverse their tastes may be, and often perhaps because they are perverse, people do not like to have even favours thrust upon them. But it was my good fortune on this, and many other occasions in life, early and late, to fall in with friends who always contrived to nick the right instant to a hair's-breadth.

I received one morning an invitation to accompany my generous friend, one of the lieutenants, to New York; and I felt, as he spoke, a bound of joy, the bare recollection of which makes my pulse beat ten strokes per minute quicker, at the distance of a good quarter of a century!

It would not be fair to the subject, nor indeed quite so to myself, to transcribe from a very boyish journal an account of this visit to New York. The inadequate expression of that period, compared with the vivid recollection of what I then felt, shows, well enough, the want of power which belongs to inexperience. Very fortunately, however, the faculty of enjoying is sooner acquired than the difficult art of describing. Yet even this useful and apparently simple science of making the most of all that turns up, requires a longer apprenticeship of good fortune than most people are aware of.

In the midst of snow and wind, we made out a very comfortless passage to New York; and after some trouble in hunting for lodgings, we were well pleased to find ourselves snugly stowed away in a capital boarding-house in Greenwich-street. We there found a large party at tea before a blazing wood-fire, which was instantly piled with fresh logs for the strangers, and the best seats relinquished for them, according to the invariable practice of that hospitable country.

If our hostess be still alive, it is hoped she will not repent of having bestowed her obliging attentions on one who, so many years afterwards, made himself, he fears, less popular in her land, than he could wish to be amongst a people to whom he owes so much, and for whom he really cherishes so much kindness. He still anxiously trusts, however, they will believe him when he declares, that, having said in his recent publication no more than what he conceived was due to strict truth, and to the integrity of history, as far as his observations and opinions went, he still feels, as he always has felt, and ever must continue to feel, towards America the heartiest good-will.

The Americans are perpetually repeating, that the foundation-stone of their liberty is fixed on the doctrine that every man is free to form his own opinions, and to promulgate them in candour and in moderation. Is it meant that a foreigner is excluded from these privileges? If not, may I ask, in what respect have I passed these limitations? The Americans have surely no fair right to be offended because my views differ from theirs; and yet, I am told, I have been rudely enough handled by the press of that country. If my motives are distrusted, I can only say I am sorely belied; if I am mistaken, regret at my unfortunate blindness were surely more dignified than anger on the part of those from whom I dissent; and if it shall chance that I am in the right, the best confirmation of the correctness of my views, in the opinion of indifferent persons, will perhaps be found in the soreness of those who wince when the truth is spoken.

Yet, after all, few things would give me more real pleasure than to know that my friends across the water would consent to take me at my word; and, considering what I have said about them as so much public matter, which it truly is, agree to reckon me in my absence, as they always did when I was amongst them, and I am sure they would count me if I went back again, as a private friend. I differed with them in politics, and I differ with them now as much as ever; but I sincerely wish them happiness individually; and as a nation, I shall rejoice if they prosper. As the Persians write, "What can I say more?" And I only hope these few words may help to make my peace with people who justly pride themselves on bearing no malice. As for myself, I have no peace to make; for I have studiously avoided reading any of the American criticisms on my book, in order that the kindly feelings I have ever entertained towards that country should not be ruffled. By this abstinence, I may have lost some information, and perhaps missed many opportunities of correcting erroneous impressions. But I set so much store by the pleasing recollection of the journey itself, and of the hospitality with which my family were everywhere received, that, whether it be right or whether it be wrong, I cannot bring myself to read anything which might disturb these agreeable associations. So let us part in peace! or rather, let us meet again in cordial communication; and if this little work shall find its way across the Atlantic, I hope it will be read there without reference to anything that has passed between us; or, at all events, with reference only to those parts of our former intercourse which are satisfactory to all parties.

After leaving the American coast, we stood once more across the gulf stream for Bermuda. Here I find the first trace of a regular journal, containing a few of those characteristic touches which, when we are sure of their being actually made on the spot, however carelessly, carry with them an easy, familiar kind of interest, that rarely belongs to the efforts of memory alone. It is, indeed, very curious how much the smallest memorandums sometimes serve to lighten up apparently forgotten trains of thought, and to bring vividly before the imagination scenes long past, and to recall turns of expression, and even the very look with which these expressions were uttered, though every circumstance connected with them may have slept in the mind for a long course of years.

It is, I believe, one of the numerous theories on the mysterious subject of dreams, that they are merely trains of recollections, touched in some way we know not of, and influenced by various causes over which we have no sort of control; and that, although they are very strangely jumbled

and combined, they always relate, so exclusively, either to past events, or to past thoughts, that no ideas strictly new ever enter our minds in sleep.

Be this true or false, I find, on reading over the scanty notes above alluded to, written at Bermuda more than six-and-twenty years ago, that I am made conscious of a feeling a good deal akin to what is produced by dreaming. Many objects long forgotten are brought back to my thoughts with perfect clearness; and these, again, suggest others, more or less distinctly, of which I possess no written record. At times a whole crowd of these recollections stand forward, almost as palpably as if they had occurred yesterday. I hear the well known voices of my old messmates —see their long-forgotten faces—and can mark, in my memory's eye, their very gait, and many minute and peculiar habits. In the next instant, however, all this is so much clouded over, that by no effort of the imagination, assisted even by the journal, can I bring back the picture as it appeared to stand only a moment before. It sometimes also happens in this curious retrospect, that a strange confusion of dates and circumstances takes place, with a vague remembrance of hopes, and fears, and wishes, painful anticipations, and bitter passing thoughts, all long since gone. Anon, these day-dreams of the past sometimes come rushing back on the fancy, all at once, but in so confused a manner, that they look exceedingly like what we often experience in sleep. Is there, in fact, any other difference, except that, in the case of slumber, we have no control over this intellectual experiment, and, in the other, we have the power of varying it at pleasure? When we are awake, we can steer the mental vessel with more or less precision; but in sleep our rudder is carried away, and we must be content to drift about at the capricious bidding of our senses, over a confused sea of recollections.

It may be asked, what is the use of working out these speculations? To which I would answer, that it may often be highly useful, in the practice of life, for people to trace their thoughts back, in order to see what have been the causes, as well as the effects, of their former resolutions. It is not only interesting, but may be very important, to observe how far determinations of a virtuous nature had an effectual influence in fortifying us against the soft insinuations, or the rude assaults of temptation; or how materially any original defect or subsequent omission in such resolutions may have brought us under the cutting lash of self-reproach.

It would probably be very difficult, if not impossible, for any person to lay open his own case so completely to the view of others, that the rest of the world should be enabled to profit, as he himself, if he chooses, may do, by his past experience in these delicate matters. I shall hardly attempt such a task, however; but shall content myself with saying, that, on now looking back to those days, I can, in many instances, lay my hand upon the very hour, the very incident, and the very thought and feeling, which have given a decided direction to many material actions of the intervening period. In some cases, the grievous anguish of remorse has engraved the lesson so deeply on the memory, that it shows like an open wound still. In others, it has left only a cicatrice, to mark where there has been suffering. But even these, like the analogous case of bodily injuries, are liable to give their twitches as the seasons vary.

It is far pleasanter, however, and a still more profitable habit, I am quite sure, to store up agreeable images of the past, with a view to present and future improvement, as well as enjoyment, than to harass the thoughts too much by the contemplation of opportunities lost, or of faculties neglected or misused. Of this cheerful kind of retrospect, every person of right thoughts must have an abundant store. For, let the croakers say what they please, 'this brave world' is exceedingly fertile in sources of pleasure to those whose principles are sound, and who, at all times and seasons, are under the wholesome consciousness, that while, without higher aid, they can essentially do nothing, there will certainly be no such assistance lent them, unless they themselves, to use a nautical phrase, 'bend their backs like seamen to the oar,' and leave nothing untried to double the Cape of Good Hope in their own life and fortunes. It is in this vigorous and sustained exertion—this 'attention suivie,' as the French call it, that most persons fail; but if manfully followed up, from a sense of duty, it will give the surest earnest of success.

It has sometimes struck me as not a little curious, that, while we have such unbounded faith in the constancy of the motions of the sun and moon, and rest with such confidence on the accuracy of our charts and books, as to sail our ships, in the darkest nights, over seas we have never traversed before; yet that, in the moral navigation of our lives, we should hesitate in following principles infinitely more important, and in the truth of which we ought to have a faith at least as undoubting. The old analogy, indeed, between the storms of the ocean, and those of our existence, holds good throughout this comparison; for the half-instructed navigator, who knows not how to depend on his chart and compass, or who has formed no solid reliance in the correctness of the guides to whom he ought to trust his ship, has no more chance of making a good passage across the wide seas, than he whose petty faith is bounded by his own narrow views and powers, is likely to be successful in the great voyage of life.

There is a term in use at sea called 'backing and filling,' which consists at one moment in bracing the yards so that the wind shall catch the sails in reverse, and, by bringing them against the masts, drive the ship stern foremost; and then, after she has gone far enough in that direction, in bracing up the yards so that the sails may be filled, and the ship again gather head-way. This manœuvre is practised in rivers when the wind is foul, but the tide favourable, and the width of the stream too small to admit of working the vessel regularly, by making tacks across. From thus alternately 'nearing' to the bank and receding from it, an appearance of indecision, or rather of an unwillingness to come too close to the ground, is produced; and thence the term is used to express figuratively, that method of speaking where reluctance is shown to grapple with the abrupt points of the subject, which yet must be approached if any good is to be done. I confess, accordingly, that, just now, I have been 'backing and filling' with my topic, and have

preferred this indirect method of suggesting to my young friends the fitting motives to action, rather than venturing to lecture them in formal terms. The true path to honour, indeed, every man must trace out for himself; but the discovery will certainly be all the easier if he knows the direction in which it lies, and the spirit in which it ought to be pursued.

The following brief specimen of a midshipman's journal will show, as well as a whole volume could do, the sort of stuff of which such documents are made. The great fault, indeed, of almost all journals consists in their being left, like Chinese paintings, without shading or relief, and in being drawn with such a barbarous perspective, that everything appears to lie in one plane, in the front of the picture.

"*Bermuda, Sunday, April* 22.

"Wind south. Last night I had the first watch. Turned out this morning at seven bells. Breakfasted on a roll and some jelly. Wind blowing pretty hard at south. Struck lower yards and topgallant masts. After breakfast read one or two tales of the Genii. Dressed for muster, and at six bells beat to divisions. I asked leave to go on shore to dine with Capt. O'Hara, but was refused. So I dined upon the Old thing—salt junk and dough. The captain landed in the pinnace. Employed myself most of the afternoon in reading Plutarch's Lives. Had coffee at four o'clock. Blowing harder than ever, and raining very much. Read the Bible till six; then went on deck. At nine went to bed. Turned out at four in the morning.

"Monday, 23d April.—Made the signal for sailing. At noon, the same old dinner—salt horse! The two pilots, Jacob and Jamie, came on board. Employed getting in the Admiral's stock."

These two names, Jacob and Jamie, will recall to people who knew Bermuda in those days many an association connected with that interesting island. They were two negroes, pilots to the men-of-war, who, in turn, took the ships out and in. Their wives, no less black and polished than themselves, were the chief laundresses of our fleet; while at their cedar-built houses on shore we often procured such indifferent meals as the narrow means of the place allowed. I only remember that our dinner, nine times in ten, consisted of ham and eggs. I forget whether or not these men were slaves; I think not: they were, at all events, extremely good-natured fellows, and always very kind and obliging to the midshipmen, particularly to those who busied themselves in making collections of shells and corallines, the staple curiosities of the spot.

It is needless to quote any more from the exact words of this matter-of-fact journal. I find it recorded, however, that next morning a boat came to us from the Boston, a frigate lying near the Leander. The captain of that ship was then, and is now, one of my kindest and steadiest friends. And right well, indeed, did he know how to confer a favour at the fitting season. The boat contained one of the most acceptable presents, I will answer for it, that ever was made to mortal; it was truly manna to starved people—being no less than a famous fat goose, a huge leg of pork, and a bag of potatoes!

Such a present at any other time and place would have been ludicrous; but at Bermuda, where we had been famishing and growling for many months with hardly a fresh meal—it was to us hungry, salt-fed boys, the 'summum bonum' of human happiness.

Next day, after breakfast, the barge being sent with one of the lieutenants, the Admiral came on board at eleven o'clock. But while his excellency was entering the ship on one side, I quitted my appointed station on the other, and without leave, slipped out of one of the main-deck ports into the pilot-boat, to secure some conch shells and corals I had bespoken, and wished to carry from Bermuda to my friends at Halifax. Having made my purchases, in the utmost haste and trepidation, I set about retreating again to my post, when, as my ill stars would have it, the first lieutenant looked over the gangway. He saw at a glance what I was about; and, calling me up, sent me by way of punishment to the mast-head, 'for being off deck when the Admiral was coming on board.' Having succeeded, however, in getting hold of my shells and some lumps of coral, I made myself as comfortable as possible in my elevated position; and upon the whole rather enjoyed it, as a piece of fun.

We then hove up the anchor, and as we made sail through the passage, I could not only distinguish, from the mast-head, the beautifully coloured reefs under water, but trace with perfect ease all the different channels between them, through which we had to thread our winding, and apparently dangerous, course. As the ship passed, the fort saluted the flag with twelve guns, which were returned with a like number: after which we shaped our course for Norfolk, in Virginia.

So far all was well. I sat enjoying the view, in one of the finest days that ever was seen. But it almost makes me hungry now, at this distance of time, to tell what followed.

From the maintopmast cross-trees, on which I was perched for my misdeeds, I had the cruel mortification of seeing my own beautiful roast goose pass along the main-deck, on its way to the cockpit. As the scamp of a servant-boy who carried the dish came abreast of the gangway, I observed him cock his eye aloft to discover how I relished the prospect. No hawk, or eagle, or vulture, ever gazed from the sky more wistfully on its prey beneath, than I did upon the banquet I was never doomed to taste. What was still more provoking, each of my mess-mates, as he ran down the quarter-deck ladder, on being summoned to dinner, looked up at me and grinned. One malicious dog provoked me a good deal by patting his fat paunch, as much as to say, 'What a glorious feast we are to have! Should not you like a bit?'

CHAPTER IX.

KEEPING WATCH.

With a few exceptions, every person on board a man-of-war keeps watch in his turn: and as this is one of the most important of the wheels which go to make up the curious clock-work of a ship's discipline, it seems to deserve a word or two in passing.

The officers and midshipmen are generally divided into three watches—First, Second, and Third. As the senior lieutenant does not keep watch, the officer next in rank takes the First, the junior lieutenant the Second, and the master the Third watch, in ships where there are not more than three lieutenants. Under each of these chiefs there is placed a squad of midshipmen; the principal one of whom is mate of the watch, the next in seniority is stationed on the forecastle, and after him comes the poop mid. The youngsters remain on the lee-side of the deck along with the mate of the watch. For it must be observed, that no persons but the captain, the lieutenants, the master, surgeon, purser, and marine officer, are ever allowed, upon any occasion whatsoever, to walk on the weather side of the quarter-deck. This custom has become so much a matter of course, that I hardly remember asking myself before, what may have been the origin of the regulation. The chief purpose, no doubt, is to draw a strong line of distinction between the different ranks; although, independently of this, the weather side is certainly the most convenient to walk upon when the ship is pressed with sail: it is also the best sheltered from wind and rain; and the view both below and aloft is more commanding than from to leeward.

Every person, not excepting the captain, when he puts his foot on this sacred spot, touches his hat; and as this salutation is supposed to be paid to the privileged region itself, all those who at the moment have the honour to be upon it are bound to acknowledge the compliment. Thus, even when a midshipman comes up and takes off his hat, all the officers on deck (the Admiral included, if he happens to be of the number) return the salute.

So completely does this form grow into a habit, that in the darkest night, and when there may not be a single person near the hatchway, it is invariably attended to, with the same precision. Indeed, when an officer of the Navy happens to be on board a merchant ship or a packet, he finds it difficult to avoid carrying his hand to his hat every time he comes on deck. I, for one, at least, can never get over the feeling, that it is rude to neglect this ceremony, and have often, when on board passage-vessels, wondered to see gentlemen so deficient in good breeding, as to come gaping up the hatchway, as if their hats were nailed to their heads, and their hands sewed into their breeches-pockets!

Of course, each person in the watch has a specific duty to attend to, as I shall endeavour to describe presently; but, first, it may be well to mention the ingenious arrangement of the hours by which the periods of watching are equally distributed to all.

In speaking of the three watches, it will perhaps avoid confusion, and rather simplify the description, to call them, for a moment, not first, second, and third, as they are named on board ship, but to designate them by the letters A, B, and C.

Let us begin, then, by supposing that A's watch commences at 8 o'clock in the evening; that officer with his party remain on deck till midnight, four hours being one period; and this is what is called the first watch. B is next roused up, to keep the middle watch, which lasts from midnight till 4 o'clock. C now comes up, and stays on deck till 8; this is the morning watch. A then returns to the deck, where he walks till noon, at which hour he is relieved by B, who stays up till 4. If C were now to keep the watch from 4 to 8, of course A would again have to keep the first watch on the second night, as he did at first starting; and all the others, in like manner, would be called on for exactly the same watches, every night and day. In order to break this uniform recurrence of intervals, an ingenious device has been hit upon to produce a constant and equitable rotation. When or where this plan was invented I do not know, but I believe it exists in the ships of all nations.

The period from 4 o'clock in the afternoon till 8 in the evening, instead of constituting one four hours' watch, is divided into two, of a couple of hours each. These, I know not why, are called the dog watches. The first, which lasts from 4 to 6 o'clock, belongs, on the second day, according to the order described above, to C, who is, of course, relieved at 6 o'clock, by A. This alteration, it will be observed, gives the first watch (from 8 to midnight) to B, on the second night; the middle (from midnight to 4) to C; and the morning watch (from 4 to 8) to A; the forenoon watch (from 8 to noon) to B; and the afternoon (from noon to 4) to C. The first dog watch (from 4 to 6) will now be kept by A, the second dog watch (from 6 to 8) by B, and the first watch (from 8 to 12) by C. By this mechanism, it will easily be perceived, the officers, on each succeeding day, have a watch to keep, always one stage earlier than that which they kept on the day before. Thus, if A have the morning watch one night, he will have the middle watch on the night following, and the first watch on the night after that again. The distribution of time which this produces is very unequal, when the short period of twenty-four hours only is considered; but the arrangement rights itself in the course of a few days. On the first day, A has ten hours' watch to keep out of the twenty-four, B eight, and C only six. But on the next day, A has only six hours, while B has ten, and C eight; while, on the third day, A has eight, B six, and C ten hours' watching; and so on, round and round, from year's end to year's end.

This variety, to a person in health and spirits, is often quite delightful. Each watch has its peculiar advantages; and I need hardly add, that each likewise furnishes an ample store of materials for complaining, to those discontented spirits whose chief delight is to coddle up grievances, as if, forsooth! the principal object of life was to keep ourselves unhappy, and to help to make others so.

The first watch (8 o'clock to midnight) which comes after the labour of the day is done, and when everything is hushed and still, carries with it this great recommendation, that although the hour of going to bed is deferred, the night's rest is not afterwards broken in upon. The prospect of 'turning in' at midnight, and being allowed to sleep till seven in the morning, helps greatly to keep us alive and merry during the first watch, and prevents the excitement of the past day from ebbing too fast. On the other hand, your thoroughbred growlers are apt to say, it is a grievous task to keep the first watch, after having gone through

all the toil of the day, and, in particular, after having kept the afternoon watch (noon to 4 o'clock), which, in hot climates, is always a severe trial upon the strength. Generally speaking, however, I think the first watch is the least unpopular; for, I suppose, no mortal, whatever he might think, was ever found so Quixotic as to profess openly that he really liked keeping watch. Such a paradox would be famously ridiculed on board ship.

The middle watch is almost universally held to be a great bore; and certainly it is a plague of the first order, to be shaken out of a warm bed at midnight, when three hours of sound sleep have sealed up our eyelids all the faster, and steeped our senses in forgetfulness, and in repose, generally much needed. It is a bitter break, too, to have four good hours sliced out of the very middle of the night's rest, especially when this tiresome interval is to be passed in the cold and rain, or, which is often still more trying, in the sultry calm of a smooth, tropical sea, when the sleepy sails, as wet with dew as if they had been dipped overboard, flap idly against the masts and rigging, but so very gently, as barely to make the reef points patter-patter along the canvas, with such monotonous notes, that the bare recollection of their sound almost sets me to sleep now.

Nevertheless, the much-abused middle watch has its advantages, at least for those ardent young spirits who choose to seek them out, and whose habit it is to make the most of things. There may be secured full three hours and a half of sound snoose before it begins, and as long a "spell of sleep" after it is over. Besides which, the mind being rested no less than the body, before the middle watch begins, both come to their task so freshly that, if there be any hard or anxious duties to execute, they can be promptly and well attended to. Even if there be nothing to do but pace the deck, the thoughts of an officer of any enthusiasm may contrive to find occupation either in looking back, or in looking forward, with that kind of cheerfulness which belongs to youth and health usefully employed. At that season of the night every one else is asleep, save the quarter-master at the conn, the helmsman at the wheel, and the look-out men at their different stations, on the gangways, the bows, and the quarters. And except, of course, the different drowsy middies, who, poor fellows! keep tramping along the quarter-deck backwards and forwards, counting the half-hour bells with anxious weariness; or gazing wistfully at the sand-glass, which the sentry at the cabin-door shakes ever and anon, as if the lazy march of time, like that of a tired donkey, could be accelerated by jogging.

But the joyous morning watch is very naturally the universal favourite. It is the beginning of a new day of activity and enterprise. The duties are attacked, too, after a good night's rest; so that, when the first touches of the dawn appear, and the horizon, previously lost in the black sky, begins to show itself in the east, there comes over the spirits a feeling of elasticity and strength, of which even the dullest are not altogether insensible. In war time, this is a moment when hundreds of eyes are engaged in peering all round into the twilight; and happy is the sharp-sighted person who first calls out, with a voice of exultation,

"A sail, sir; a sail!"

"Whereabouts?" is the eager reply.

"Three or four points on the lee-bow, sir."

"Up with the helm!" cries the officer. "Set the topgallant and royal studding-sails; rig out the foretopmast studding-sail boom! Youngster, run down and tell the captain there is a stranger on the lee-bow, and say that we are making all sail. She looks very roguish."

As the merry morning comes dancing gloriously on, and other vessels heave in sight, fresh measures must be taken as to the course steered, or the quantity of sail to be set. So that this period of the day, at sea, in a cruising ship, gives occasion, more perhaps than any other time, for the exercise of those stirring qualities of prompt decision, and vigour in the execution of every purpose, which, probably, form the most essential characteristics of the profession.

The morning watch, also, independent of the active employment it hardly every fails to afford, leaves the whole day free, from eight o'clock till four in the afternoon. Many a previously broken resolution is put off to this period, only to be again stranded. To those, however, who choose to study, the certainty of having one entire day in every three, clear of the distraction of all technical duties, is of the greatest consequence; though it must be owned, that, at the very best, a ship is but a wretched place for reading. The eternal motion, and the infernal noise, almost baffle the most resolute students.

For a hungry midshipman (when are they not hungry?) the morning watch has attractions of a still more tender nature. The mate, or senior man amongst them, is always invited to breakfast with the officers at eight o'clock; and one or two of the youngsters, in turn, breakfast with the captain at half-past eight, along with the officer of the morning watch and the first lieutenant, who, in many ships, is the constant guest of the captain, both at this meal and at dinner.

The officer of the forenoon watch, or that from eight to noon, invariably dines with the captain at three o'clock; and as the ward-room dinner is placed on the table at two, exactly one hour before that of the captain, the officer who has kept the forenoon watch remounts the deck, the instant the drum beats "The Roast Beef of Old England," the well-known dinner-signal of the officers. His purpose in coming up is to relieve, or take the place of his brother-officer keeping the afternoon watch, till three o'clock arrives, at which hour the captain's dinner is always served. The same interchange of good offices, in the way of relief, as it is called, takes place amongst the midshipmen of the forenoon and afternoon watches. It is material to observe, however, that all these arrangements, though they have the graceful air of being pieces of mutual and voluntary civility, have become quite as much integral parts of the ordinary course of nautical affairs as any other established ordinance of the ship.

On Sunday, the captain invariably dines with the officers in the ward-room; and although "shore-going people" sometimes take upon themselves to quiz these periodical, and, Heaven knows, often formal dinner-parties, there can be no doubt that they do contribute, and that in a most essential degree, to the maintenance of strict discipline on

board ship. Indeed, I believe it is now generally admitted, that it would be next to impossible to preserve good order in a man-of-war, for any length of time, without this weekly ceremonial, coupled, of course, with that of the officers dining, in turn, with their captain.

We know that too much familiarity breeds contempt; but in situations where there is of necessity much intercourse, too little familiarity will as inevitably breed ill-will, distrust, apprehension, and mutual jealousy. The difficulty lies in regulating with due caution this delicate sort of intimacy, and in hitting the exact mean between too much freedom and too much reserve of manner. The proverb points out the evil clearly enough, but leaves us to find the remedy. In the Navy, long experience seems to have shown, that this important purpose can be best accomplished by the captain and his officers occasionally meeting one another at table, not capriciously, at irregular intervals, or by fits and starts of favour, as the humour suits, but in as fixed an order, as if the whole of this social intercourse were determined by Admiralty regulation.

It will readily be understood by any one who has attended much to the subject of discipline, and will be felt, I should think, more or less, by all who have been engaged personally in the management of a house, a regiment, a ship, a shop, or any other establishment in which distinctions of rank and subdivisions of labour prevail, that nothing ever does, or can go on well, unless, over and above the mere legal authority possessed by the head, he shall carry with him a certain amount of the good-will and confidence of those under him. For it is very material, in order to balance, as it were, the technical power with which the chief of such establishment is armed, that there should be some heartiness, some real cheerfulness, between him and those he commands. Accordingly, the obedience which they yield to him should not be entirely the result either of mere habit, or of the still more frigid motive of fear, but should be made to spring, if possible, out of sincere good-will, as an essential if not the principal ingredient in the stimulus. In ordinary times, it is true, the duty goes on pretty well in a ship-of-war, by the sheer momentum of an established routine.

It may be added, that things often proceed with a degree of success almost as miraculous in the apprehension of the ignorant, as the movements of a watch appear to the eyes of a savage. But in times of danger, when doubts and difficulties beset an officer, or protracted labours fatigue his crew, and untried resources and exertions are called for every moment, it is discovered that mere routine (though even at such periods it does a great deal) will not accomplish all that is required. The captain then finds out, often when it is too late, that unless motives of a more generous and stirring nature come into play, to give fresh vigour to the formalities of his discipline, not only his own reputation, but some of the great ends of the public service, may be lost.

The nature of our profession is so complicated, and the occasions are so frequent on which these well-known principles are brought into action, that, I believe, it almost invariably happens, when the captain and his officers are not on terms, or do not pull together, that the ship falls, more or less, out of discipline. This occurs even when the officers and their captain are sufficiently public-spirited to desire sincerely not to allow private differences to interfere in any degree with the course of official duty. For the sailors are exceedingly quick-sighted to such matters, and both they and the midshipmen not only discover immediately when there is any coolness between the captain and his officers, but are naturally prone to exaggerate the cause and consequences of such differences. If, however, as generally happens, the crew know nothing of the real points in dispute, they fall into a worse error by inventing the most preposterous stories to account for those misunderstandings which they see exist between the higher powers. Advantage, also, is very soon taken of these disagreements, by such persons amongst the crew as are always ready to escape from the restraints of good order, and who imagine, too often with reason, that the officer who is not on pleasant terms with his captain will not be duly supported by him. In a word, when the officers and captain cease to respect one another,—or, what comes exactly to the same thing, appear to have lost that mutual respect for one another, of which an easy sociability of intercourse is one of the most obvious proofs,—they speedily forfeit the respect of the people under their command. I can compare the harsh and grating state of affairs on board ship, when, unhappily, there exists bad blood between the captain and officers, to nothing so well as to an engine, amongst the machinery of which a handful of gravel has been cast.

It may be asked, how can the simple operation of dining together once or twice a week stave off so great an evil? But the answer is easy; for every one must be aware, that it is by small beginnings and slight causes of imaginary offence, by trivial misunderstandings unexplained, or by real but minor causes of just indignation not apologised for, that the bitterest heartburnings of life too often arise. If these seeds of dissension can be weeded out before they begin to germinate, their evil growth may not only be checked, but actual good, in most instances, be made to spring up in their place.

In order to render the practical operation of these things quite clear, I shall state two cases, both of which I have seen occur on board ship a hundred times, and of which I can speak with some confidence, as I have myself often acted a part on different sides, and therefore know their bearings from actual trial.

Suppose, in the first place, that the captain comes upon deck just before noon, and, on seeing something wrong—the main-yard not braced up enough, the lee foretopgallant sheet not home, or the jib not quite hoisted up—and suppose that, as these are points upon which, whether whimsically or not, he is very particular, he expresses himself to the officer in terms of reproach rather too strong for the occasion. Without reflecting upon the injustice he is guilty of, the captain may perhaps, in this way, punish a zealous and hard-working man, for a mere trifle, almost as severely as if he had been found sleeping on his watch, or was guilty of some offence caused by wilful neglect.

The lieutenant, however, can say nothing; he must bow and submit. In a few minutes, the sun comes to the meridian, and it is made twelve

o'clock. The boatswain pipes to dinner, the deck is relieved, and the officer goes down below, in a high state of irritation with his captain, at what he conceives the undue severity of the reprimand about the foretopgallant sheet. The first thing he does, on entering the ward-room door, is to fling his hat the whole length of the apartment; so that, unless it be adroitly caught by the marine officer, who is generally playing the flute on the lockers abaft, it would stand a chance of going out of the stern windows. The soldier, of course, thus called upon to look up, stops in the middle of the second bar of 'God save the King,' or 'Robin Adair,' at which he has been hammering, in company with the master of the band, for the last three months, and says,

"Holla! man, what's the matter?"

"Matter!" cries the other. "I'll be shot if it is not enough to make a man run stark staring mad!"

"What is the matter, I ask you?" begs the marine, preparing to recommence the eternal tune.

"Why, there have I been working, and slaving, and wearing my life and soul out, all the forenoon, to please that bad-tempered, snappish, ill-to-please knob of a skipper of ours; and what do I get? Why, he takes mighty good care to shut his eyes to all the good a fellow does, but catches hold eagerly enough of the smallest omission in his thousand-and-one whims (none of which are of any consequence!), in order to indulge himself in one of his reprimands. It's quite clear," adds the officer, warmed by this explosion of his own passion, "that the captain has a spite at me, and is determined to drive me out of the ship, to make way for some follower of his own."

"Stuff and nonsense!" exclaims the peace-making man of war; "the captain is the best friend you have."

"Friend?" roars the other; "I tell you what——"

But just at this moment the captain's steward enters the ward-room, and going up to the enraged officer of the forenoon watch, says mechanically to him,

"The captain's compliments, sir, and will be glad of your company to dinner."

To which the officer replies, quite as mechanically,

"My compliments, and I'll wait on him."

But as soon as the door is shut, he turns again to the marine, and says,

"I'm doucedly sorry, now, that I did not refuse."

"Are you?" says the soldier, relapsing into his loyal tune again.

By-and-by, however, comes two o'clock: the ward-room dinner is placed on the table; the drum beats the 'Roast Beef;' the officer of the forenoon watch is sent for, as usual, to relieve his messmate on deck, as I have before described; and, in due course, after strutting and fretting his hour upon the stage, in 'full togs,' nursing his anger, in order to let the captain see that he is hurt, he is told that dinner is ready in the cabin. In he marches, accordingly, and there takes his appointed seat as doggedly as if he were nailed to the chair. The pease-soup is discussed in pretty solemn silence; but while the remove is under adjustment, the captain says to his offended officer, "Come, Mr. Haultight, shall you and I have a glass of wine? What shall it be?" By these few magical words, and in this single glass of sherry, is forgotten, for ever and ever, all the previous irritation. It is not by the words, so much as by the tone and manner of saying them, that the captain makes the officer feel how anxious he is to have the good understanding restored, or that he regrets what has passed. Of course, if the officer be not one of those pig-headed and inflexible fellows, upon whom all sense of kindness is wasted, he seizes the bottle, and filling his glass, replies,

"With all my heart, sir."

And there, in all probability, is an end of a matter which, but for this early opportunity of putting things to rights, might perhaps have rankled long in the mind of the officer, and given rise to acts of insubordination as injurious to himself as to the public service.

It may not be useless to suggest here, to young people, that in most cases of dispute which arise between gentlemen, the smallest voluntary apology is beyond calculation more satisfactory, and assuredly affords a far more complete reparation to wounded honour, than any conceivable amount of compulsory acknowledgment. The rough savage, indeed, who is acquainted with no measure in these things, takes his revenge at the point of the scalping-knife. But a gentleman, in a widely different spirit, and who knows that even the slightest admission of error on the part of his antagonist causes more pain than he can ever deliberately wish to inflict, will catch with eagerness at the first symptoms of regret on the part of his opponent, being quite certain that, the less he exacts, the more of what is really worthy of his acceptance will be given him. Besides which, instead of urging the other into lasting mortification and perhaps enmity, he may manage to secure, by well-timed moderation, both the gratitude and the respect of a man who might otherwise become permanently his foe.

I am not aware of, nor can I conceive, any other means by which the numerous misunderstandings constantly occurring on board ship could be arranged without great risk of injuring discipline. In cases where the matter in dispute is small, or where the fault is equally shared between the parties, formal explanations are not only useless, but often ridiculous, and generally prove as annoying to one side as to the other. Where the dispute, on the other hand, is really of consequence, there may often be a serious and hurtful loss of official dignity, on the part of the superior, if he make too express an apology. These occasional, but uniformly-recurring opportunities of meeting at table, on easy and familiar terms, however, furnish not only ready but very ample means of finally accommodating such things, in every case which can fall within the proper range of compromise. If officers be only influenced by a right spirit of public duty, and always recollect what is due to private dignity of character, it will rarely happen that arrangements, creditable alike to both parties, and useful to the service, may not be easily effected.

The above example is one in which the superior is supposed to have been in the wrong; but, as

may be imagined, the opposite case will often happen likewise. I have seen an officer go on, for several days together, purposely teasing his captain, but all the time taking the greatest possible care to keep within the law. Who, I may ask, that has had to do with command of any kind, whether afloat or on shore, in the Navy or in the nursery, has not felt the provocation of such petty hostility? For my part, I can compare it to nothing but the stinging of a musquitto, which you spend half the night in trying to catch, losing your rest and your temper to no purpose, owing to the dexterity of your antagonist, who thus shows that though he be small, he is far from insignificant.

But if, while this sort of snapping and snarling is going on, Sunday comes about, all is settled. On this day, as I before stated, the captain always dines in the ward-room; and when once there, he is received, as a matter of course, with attention by all—Mr. Musquitto inclusive. It is the general custom, on these occasions, to unbend a little of the strait-lacedness of ship discipline, so that a kind of regulated, starched familiarity is permitted to appear above the surface. This the captain rather encourages, though, of course, in a cautious way, but more than he ever permits himself to allow at his own table.

During dinner all the officers drink wine with their guest; and when this act of hospitality is performed by the tormenting officer, above alluded to, the captain, if he be a man of sense, will not fail to play off a little of his agreeableness upon the person who has been buzzing round him during the preceding week. By this means, or some one of the numberless little devices by which people who are met together professedly to be social, and wish to be on good terms with one another, always know how to hit upon, all such scores as this, and many others, may be wiped off. Without some safety-valve of this kind to the high-pressure of naval discipline, I really do not know how so enormous and complicated a contrivance could go on at all. I believe, accordingly, it is now pretty generally allowed in the Navy, that in those ships where the captain either lives altogether alone or altogether with his officers, or where they sometimes dine with one another and sometimes not, instead of following the established routine of the service, and meeting at regular periods, the discipline is found greatly wanting, and all parties, high and low, speedily become discontented.

I have already mentioned that the first watch begins, nominally, at eight, and ends at midnight; but people are much mistaken who suppose that a sleepy-headed midshipman, with the prospect of a cold middle watch before him, and just awakened out of a sound nap, is disposed to jump up at once, dress himself, and run upon deck. Alas! it is far from this; and no one who has not been exposed to the trial can conceive the low ebb to which patriotism, zeal, public spirit (call it what you please), sinks at such an hour, in the breast of the unhappy wretch who, in the midst of one of those light and airy dreams which render the night season of young people such a heaven of repose, is suddenly roused up. After being awakened by a rude tug at the clews of his hammock, he is hailed, after the following fashion, by the gruff old quarter-master:—

"Mr. Doughead!"

No answer. Another good tug at the hammock.

"Mr. Doughead! it's twelve o'clock, sir!"

"Very well, very well; you need not shake me out of bed, need you? What sort of a night is it?"

"It rains a little, sir, and is just beginning to blow. It looks very black, sir."

"Oh, plague take it! Then we shall have to take in a reef, I suppose?"

"It seems very like it, sir. It is beginning to snuffle."

With this Mr. Doughead gives himself a good shrug in his blanket, turns half round, to escape the glare of light from the quarter-master's lantern, hung up within six inches of his face expressly to keep him awake, and in ten seconds he is again tightly clasped in the arms of Morpheus, the presiding deity of the cockpit at that hour. By-and-by comes down the quarter-master of the middle watch, who, unlike the young gentleman, has relieved the deck twenty minutes before.

"Mr. Doughead! it's almost one bell, sir."

"Indeed!" exclaims the youth. "I never knew anything of it. I never was called."

"Oh yes, you were, sir. The man I relieved said you asked him what sort of weather it was, and whether we should have to take in a reef."

"I ask about the weather? That's only one of the lies he always tells, to get me into a scrape."

While they are speaking, the bell strikes one, indicating that half an hour has elapsed since the first conversation took place, touching the weather; and presently, before Mr. Doughead has got his second foot over the side of his hammock, the mid who is to be relieved by him comes rattling down the cock-pit ladder, as wet as a shag, cold, angry, and more than half asleep.

"I say, Master Doughy, do you mean to relieve the deck to-night? Here it's almost two bells, and you have hardly shown a leg yet. I'll be hanged if it is not too bad! You are the worst relief in the whole ship. I am obliged to keep all my own watch, and generally half of yours. I'll not stand it any more; but go to the first lieutenant to-morrow morning, and see whether he cannot find ways and means of making you move a little faster. It's a disgrace to the service!"

To all this Duffy has only one pettish, dogged reply,

"I tell you again, I was not called."

The appeal to the first lieutenant, however, is seldom made; for all the parties concerned are pretty much alike. But the midshipmen are not slow at times to take the law of these cases into their own hands, and to execute summary justice, according to their own fashion, on any particularly incorrigibly "bad relief," as these tardy gentlemen are aptly termed.

One of the most common punishments, on these occasions, is called "cutting down," a process not quite so fatal as might be imagined from the term. Most people, I presume, know what sort of a thing a hammock is. It consists of a piece of canvas, five feet long by two wide, suspended to the deck overhead by means of two sets of small lines, called clews, made fast to grummets, or rings of rope, which again are attached by a lanyard to

the battens stretching along the beams. In this sacking are placed a small mattress, a pillow and a couple of blankets, to which a pair of sheets may or may not be added. The degree of nocturnal room and comfort enjoyed by these young gentlemen may be understood, when it is mentioned that the whole of the apparatus just described occupies less than a foot and a half in width, and that the hammocks touch one another. Nevertheless, I can honestly say, that the soundest sleep by far, that I have ever known, has been found in these apparently uncomfortable places of repose; and though the recollection of many a slumber broken up, and the bitter pang experienced on making the first move to exchange so cozy a nest, for the snarling of a piercing north-west gale on the coast of America, will never leave my memory, yet I look back to those days and nights with a sort of evergreen freshness of interest, which only increases with years.

The wicked operation of "cutting down," may be managed in three ways. The mildest form is to take a knife and divide the foremost lanyard or suspending cord. Of course that end of the hammock instantly falls, and the sleepy-headed youth is pitched out, feet foremost, on the deck. The other plan, which directs the after-lanyard to be cut, is not quite so gentle, nor so safe, as it brings down the sleeper's head with a sharp bang on the deck, while his heels are jerked into the air. The third is to cut away both ends at once, which has the effect of bringing the round stern of the young officer in contact with the edge of any of the chests, which may be placed so as to receive it. The startled victim is then rolled out of bed with his nose on the deck; or, if he happen to be sleeping in the tier, he tumbles on the hard bends of the cable coiled under him. This flooring is much more rugged, and not much softer than the planks, so that his fall is but a choice of miserable bumps.

The malice of this horse-play is sometimes augmented by placing a line round the middle part of the hammock, and fastening it to the beams overhead, in such a way that, when the lanyards at the ends are cut, the head and tail of the youth shall descend freely; but the nobler part of him being secured by the belly-band, as it is called, the future hero of some future Trafalgar remains suspended ingloriously, in mid air, like the golden fleece over a woollen-draper's shop.

These are but a few of the tricks played off upon those who will not relieve the deck in proper time. I remember an incorrigible snooser, who had been called twice or thrice, but still gave no symptoms of any intention of "showing a leg," the only allowable test of sincerity in the process called "turning out." About five o'clock, on a fine tropical morning, when the ship was cruising off the Mono Passage, in the West Indies, and just before the day began to dawn, it was resolved, in a full conclave of the middies of his own watch, assembled on the lee-side of the quarter-deck, that an example should forthwith be made of the sleeper.

A detachment, consisting of four stout hands, were sent to the hammock of the culprit. Two of them held the youth firmly down, while the others wrapped the bed-clothes round him, and then lashed him up, that is, strapped him tightly in by means of the lashing, a long cord with which the hammocks are secured when brought upon deck in the day-time. No part of the unfortunate wight was left exposed except his face. When he was fairly tied in, the lanyards of his hammock were cast off, and the bundle, half midshipman half-bedding, was dragged along, like a log of wood, to the square of the hatchway.

Meanwhile the confederates on deck had thrown the end of the signal-haulyards down the cockpit wind-sail; a wide canvass pipe, by which, in hot climates, air is sent to the lower parts of the ship. These signal-haulyards, I must explain, are led through small sheeve-holes in the truck, a little turban-shaped, wooden cap, fitted on the royal-mast-head. The ordinary purpose of the signal-haulyards, as their name points out, is to display the flags necessary in communicating with other ships; but upon this occasion, they were fastened to one of the grummets of the unhappy sleepy-headed reefer's hammock.

When all was secure, the word "haul up!" was given from below, upon which the party on deck hoisted away. The sleeper awakened vanished from the cockpit only to make his appearance, in a few seconds, at the mouth of the wind-sail, half way between the quarter-deck and the mizen-stay. Of course the boys watched their opportunity, when the officer of the watch had gone forward on the gangway, to see how the headyards were trimmed; but long before he came aft again, their victim was lowered down, and the signal-haulyards unbent. What to do with the wretch next was a great puzzle; till one of them said, "Oh! let us stick him up on his end, between two of the guns on the weather side of the deck, and perhaps the officer of the watch may take him for an Egyptian mummy, and have him sent to the British Museum as a present to the king." This advice was instantly followed; and the enraged, mortified, and helpless youngster, being placed so that the first rays of the sun should fall on his countenance, there was no mistaking his identity.

I need scarcely mention, that the lieutenants and other commissioned officers cannot be "served up" in this way, which is almost a pity, for they are sometimes as abominably lazy as the most pudding-pated midshipman of their watch. It too often happens that, instead of being the first, they are the very last persons to relieve the deck. There is hardly anything more annoying than being detained on deck half an hour, and sometimes more, for want of our relief, after the watch we have kept is ended. This extra and most tedious period, often looks longer than double the same length of time passed in our own proper turn of duty: and the dislocation of temper it produces is very difficult of repair. Many a time and oft, when I have been kept waiting for the officer who was to relieve me, long, long beyond the proper time, I have inwardly sworn deeply, that if ever I came to the command of a ship, I would reform this intolerable abuse; and I flatter myself I made good my promise. I gave positive orders, and took measures to have them duly obeyed, that the usual mustering of the watch whose turn it was to come on deck, should take place, not, as it generally does, at the half hour, but exactly at ten minutes after the bell struck, which announced the close of the preceding watch.

And I directed, and carefully enforced my directions, that this ceremony of mustering the fresh watch should be performed under the superintendence of the officer whose turn of duty it now became. Thus, the deck was always relieved considerably within a quarter of an hour after the former watch was ended.

In addition to this, I made it an invariable rule, the instant it struck eight in the evening, to begin mustering the people of the first watch, of course under the superintendence of the lieutenant of that watch; so that the men who were to be called up at midnight might tumble into their beds at once, and have their full period of four hours' rest before being "turned out" to keep the middle watch. I take the liberty of recommending these plans to my brother-officers afloat, as, I can assure them, they answer exceedingly well in practice.

The officers and midshipmen are divided into three watches, as I have described above; but the crew, in most ships, are divided into only two watches. By taking a good deal of care, however, in arranging the people properly, the seamen and marines, almost in every case, may likewise be put at three watches, instead of what is termed "watch and watch," which is simply, turn about.

The illustrious voyager Captain Cook was, I believe, the first who introduced this admirable practice, as may be seen in his Essay on the Method of preserving the Health of the Crew of the 'Resolution,' printed in the Philosophical Transactions for 1776, vol. lxvi. p. 402. From that masterly paper we discover that many of the most important of our modern improvements in naval discipline are essentially due to the sagacity of that great navigator. Of all officers that ever lived, the great Captain Cook took the best way of establishing the soundness of his principles, that of invariable practical success, not in one or two situations only, but in the midst of such a variety of circumstances, that no part of his system remained untried. His plans were found applicable in the coldest regions, when his people were exposed to severe hardships in their attempts to reach the South Pole; and not less so when they became acquainted with the luxurious climate and voluptuous manners of the South Sea Islands.

Unfortunately, the science of discipline cannot be reduced to rule and compass, like that of navigation; but a great deal has already been done, and may still be done, to establish some leading principles of this important branch of the profession, round which its numerous details revolve. It appears, however, that much remains to be accomplished towards its improvement. Nor am I aware of any greater benefit that could be conferred upon the Navy, than the composition of a perfectly intelligible, popular treatise on discipline, which should include all that is known, and has actually been tried by the best authorities, together with such examples of the operation of these principles as appear capable of useful application to general practice.

Such, however, is the diversity of our nature, that, supposing a work of this kind to be distributed throughout the Navy, and supposing it possible to have it made as complete as the condition of things will allow, there would still remain, I suspect, an ample field for the exercise of any amount of talents and resource on the part of officers. So far, indeed, from such a methodised system acting as any constraint upon the conduct of a judicious officer, the chances are, that he would only derive from it fresh suggestions, or hints, for rendering his discipline still more perfect; while at each fresh increment of knowledge he would be made sensible how much more he had still to learn.

I do not state this idea either as new, or as applicable solely to naval affairs. The same thing occurs, in a still more striking degree, in politics, and, generally, in all those branches of civil as well as military authority, or any other kind of rule, where the passions and interests of men are placed under the guidance of their fellow-creatures. But, without launching forth on such a sea of topics, it will be admitted to be highly important that officers, and particularly young officers, should be made sensible how much caution is necessary in their discipline, since we know that even the wisest and the most experienced arrive, at last, only at this conclusion, that much still remains beyond their grasp, which they have not yet learned; and that every day may be expected to produce complicated cases of such doubt and difficulty, as will require the exercise of all their patience and attention.

But, although we cannot get to the bottom of the subject, or ever hope to frame a set of regulations to meet one-thousandth part of the cases of ordinary discipline, we ought not to despair upon this point, any more than on other perplexing questions. Nor should we relax in our efforts to investigate those laws in the moral organization of our nature, merely because they are complicated. It is a fine remark of La Place, that even the motes which we see dancing in the sunbeam are regulated, in their apparently capricious movements, by the very same laws of gravitation and momentum which determine the orbits of the planets. In like manner, there can be no doubt that, if we only knew how to trace it, this beautiful analogy would be found to extend to the laws regulating the minutest of those moral influences, which we are apt so hastily to pronounce irregular and uncertain.

The science of moral government, whether afloat or on shore, and whether the scale be great or small, is like that of physical astronomy, and has what may be called its anomalies and disturbances, sometimes very difficult to be estimated, and requiring numberless equations, or allowances, to set them right; but the pursuit is not, on that account, one whit the less true to our nature, or less worthy of that patient investigation by which alone truth can ever be reached, and all such apparent discordances reconciled.

CHAPTER X.

DANGERS OF A NOVA SCOTIA FOG. CAPT. FREDERICK HICKEY.

On the 9th of May, we reached Halifax, off which port we were detained in a very disagreeable way; for we had the misfortune to be kept three whole days off the harbour, in one of those

Nova Scotia fogs, which are celebrated all over the world. I can hardly give by description an idea of how gloomy they are; but I think their effects may be compared to those of the scirocco; with the further annoyance, that while they last, we are not able to see far beyond our noses. They are even worse than rain, for they seem to wet one through sooner; while they make every thing appear dreary, and certainly render all the world lazy and discontented.

On the day we made the land, we had great hopes of being able to enter the harbour, as the wind was fair: when, all at once, we were surrounded by so thick a mist, that, for the three succeeding days, we could not see above twenty yards on any side.

There are few things, indeed, more provoking than these fogs off Halifax; for, as they happen to be companions of that very wind, the south-east, which is the best for running in, the navigator is plagued with the tormenting consciousness, that if he could be allowed but a couple of hours' clear weather, his port would be gained, and his troubles over. The clearing up, therefore, of these odious clouds or veils is about the most delightful thing I know; and the instantaneous effect which a distinct sight of the land, or even of the sharp horizon, when far at sea, has on the mind of every person on board, is quite remarkable. All things look bright, fresh, and more beautiful than ever. The stir over the whole ship at these moments is so great, that even persons sitting below can tell at once that the fog has cleared away. The rapid clatter of the men's feet springing up the hatchways at the lively sound of the boatswain's call to "make sail!" soon follows. Then comes the cheerful voice of the officer, hailing the topmen to shake out the reefs, trice up the stay-sails, and rig out the booms. That peculiar and well-known kind of echo, also, by which the sound of the voice is thrown back from the wet sails, contributes, in like manner, to produce a joyous elasticity of spirits, greater, I think, than is excited by most of the ordinary occurrences of a sea-life.

A year or two after the time I am speaking of, it was resolved to place a heavy gun upon the rock on which Sambro light-house is built; and, after a good deal of trouble, a long twenty-four pounder was hoisted up to the highest ridge of this prominent station. It was then arranged that, if, on the arrival of any ship off the harbour in a period of fog, she chose to fire guns, these were to be answered from the light-house; and in this way a kind of audible, though invisible, telegraph might be set to work. If it happened that the officers of the ship were sufficiently familiar with the ground, and possessed nerves stout enough for such a groping kind of navigation, perilous at best, it was possible to run fairly into the harbour, notwithstanding the obscurity, by watching the sound of these guns, and attending closely to the depth of water.

I never sailed in any ship which ventured upon this feat; but I perfectly recollect a curious circumstance, which occurred, I think, to His Majesty's ship Cambrian. She had run in from sea towards the coast, enveloped in one of these dense fogs. Of course they took for granted that the light-house and the adjacent *land*, Halifax included, were likewise covered with an impenetrable cloud or mist. But it so chanced, by what freak of Dame Nature I know not, that the fog, on that day, was confined to the deep water; so that we, who were in the port, could see it, at the distance of several miles from the coast, lying on the ocean like a huge stratum of snow, with an abrupt face, fronting the shore. The Cambrian, lost in the midst of this fog-bank, supposing herself to be near the land, fired a gun. To this the light-house replied; and so the ship and the light went on, pelting away, gun for gun, during half the day, without ever seeing one another. The people at the light-house had no means of communicating to the frigate, that, if she would only stand on a little further, she would disentangle herself from the cloud, in which, like Jupiter Olympius of old, she was wasting her thunder.

At last, the captain, hopeless of its clearing up, gave orders to pipe to dinner; but as the weather, in all respects except this impenetrable mist, was quite fine, and the ship was still in deep water, he directed her to be steered towards the shore, and the lead kept constantly going. As one o'clock approached, he began to feel uneasy, from the water shoaling, and the light-house guns sounding closer and closer; but being unwilling to disturb the men at their dinner, he resolved to stand on for the remaining ten minutes of the hour. Lo and behold! however, they had not sailed half a mile further, before the flying-jib-boom end emerged from the wall of fog, then the bowsprit shot into daylight, and, lastly, the ship herself glided out of the cloud into the full blaze of a bright and "sunshine holiday." All hands were instantly turned up to make sail; and the men, as they flew on deck, could scarcely believe their senses when they saw behind them the huge bank, right ahead the harbour's mouth, with the bold cliffs of Cape Sambro on the left, and, farther on, the ships at their moorings, with their ensigns and pendants blowing out, light and dry, in the breeze.

A far different fate, alas! attended His Majesty's ship Atalante, Captain Frederick Hickey. On the morning of the 10th of November, 1813, this ship stood in for Halifax harbour in very thick weather, carefully feeling her way with the lead, and having look-out men at the jib-boom end, fore-yard-arms, and everywhere else from which a glimpse of the land was likely to be obtained. After breakfast, a fog signal-gun was fired, in the expectation of its being answered by the light-house on Cape Sambro, near which it was known they must be. Within a few minutes, accordingly, a gun was heard in the N. N. W. quarter, exactly where the light was supposed to lie. As the soundings agreed with the estimated position of the ship, and as the guns from the Atalante, fired at intervals of fifteen minutes, were regularly answered in the direction of the harbour's mouth, it was determined to stand on, so as to enter the port under the guidance of these sounds alone. By a fatal coincidence of circumstances, however, these answering guns were fired, not by Cape Sambro, but by His Majesty's ship Barrossa, which was likewise entangled by the fog. She, too, supposed that she was communicating with the light-house, whereas it was the guns of the unfortunate Atalante that she heard all the time.

There was, certainly, no inconsiderable risk incurred by running in for the harbour's mouth under such circumstances, even if the guns had been fired by the light-house. But it will often happen that it becomes an officer's duty to put his ship, as well as his life, in hazard; and this appears to have been exactly one of those cases. Captain Hickey was charged with urgent despatches relative to the enemy's fleet, which it was of the greatest importance should be delivered without an hour's delay. But there was every appearance of this fog lasting a week; and as he and his officers had passed over the ground a hundred times before, and were as intimately acquainted with the spot as any pilot could be, it was resolved to try the bold experiment; and the ship was forthwith steered in the supposed direction of Halifax.

They had not, however, stood on far, before one of the look-out men exclaimed, "Breakers ahead! Hard a-starboard!" But it was too late, for, before the helm could be put over, the ship was amongst those formidable reefs known by the name of the Sisters' Rocks, or eastern ledge of Sambro Island. The rudder and half of the stern-post, together with great part of the false keel, were driven off at the first blow, and floated up alongside. There is some reason to believe, indeed, that a portion of the bottom of the ship, loaded with 120 tons of iron ballast, was torn from the upper works by this fearful blow, and that the ship, which instantly filled with water, was afterwards buoyed up merely by the empty casks, till the decks and sides were burst through or riven asunder by the waves.

The captain, who, throughout the whole scene, continued as composed as if nothing remarkable had occurred, now ordered the guns to be thrown overboard; but before one of them could be cast loose, or a breeching cut, the ship fell over so much that the men could not stand. It was, therefore, with great difficulty that a few guns were fired as signals of distress. In the same breath that this order was given, Captain Hickey desired the yard tackles to be hooked, in order that the pinnace might be hoisted out; but as the masts, deprived of their foundation, barely stood, tottering from side to side, the people were called down again. The quarter boats were then lowered into the water with some difficulty; but the jolly-boat, which happened to be on the poop undergoing repairs, in being launched overboard, struck against one of the stern davits, bilged and went down. As the ship was now falling fast over on her beam ends, directions were given to cut away the fore and main mast. Fortunately, they fell without injuring the large boat on the booms—their grand hope. At the instant of this crash, the ship parted in two, between the main and mizen masts; and within a few seconds afterwards, she again broke right across, between the fore and main-masts: so that the poor Atalante now formed a mere wreck, divided into three pieces, crumbling into smaller fragments at every send of the swell.

By this time a considerable crowd of the men had scrambled into the pinnace on the booms, in hopes that she might float off as the ship sunk; but Captain Hickey, seeing that the boat, so loaded, could never swim, desired some twenty of the men to quit her; and, what is particularly worthy of remark, his orders, which were given with the most perfect coolness, were as promptly obeyed as ever. Throughout the whole of these trying moments, indeed, the discipline of the ship appears to have been maintained, not only without the smallest trace of insubordination, but with a degree of cheerfulness which is described as truly wonderful. Even when the masts fell, the sound of the crashing spars were drowned in the animating huzzas of the undaunted crew, though they were then clinging to the weather gunwale, with the sea, from time to time, making a clean breach over them, and when they were expecting every instant to be carried to the bottom!

As soon as the pinnace was relieved from the pressure of the crowd, she floated off the booms, or rather was knocked off by a sea, which turned her bottom upwards, and whelmed her into the surf amidst the fragments of the wreck. The people, however, imitating the gallant bearing of their captain, and keeping their eyes fixed upon him, never, for one instant, lost their self-possession. By dint of great exertions, they succeeded in not only righting the boat, but in disentangling her from the confused heap of spars, and the dash of the breakers, so as to place her at a little distance from the wreck, where they waited for further orders from the captain, who, with about forty men, still clung to the poor remains of the gay Atalante, once so much admired!

An attempt was next made to construct a raft, as it was feared the three boats could not possibly carry all hands; but the violence of the waves prevented this, and it was resolved to trust to the boats alone, though they were already, to all appearance, quite full. It became now, however, absolutely necessary to take to them, as the wreck was disappearing rapidly; and in order to pack close, most of the men were removed to the pinnace, where they were laid flat in the bottom, like herrings in a barrel, while the small boats returned to pick off the rest. This proved no easy matter in any case, while in others it was found impossible; so that many men had to swim for it; others were dragged through the waves by ropes, and some were forked off by oars and other small spars.

Amongst the crew there was one famous merry fellow, a black fiddler, who was discovered, at this critical juncture, clinging to the main chains, with his beloved Cremona squeezed tightly but delicately under his arm—a ludicrous picture of distress, and a subject of some joking amongst the men, even at this moment. It soon became indispensable, that he should lose one of two things—his fiddle or his life. So, at last, after a painful struggle, the professor and his violin were obliged to part company!

The poor negro musician's tenacity of purpose arose from sheer love of his art; but there was another laugh raised about the same time, at the expense of the captain's clerk, who, stimulated purely by a sense of duty, lost all recollection of himself, in his anxiety to save what was entrusted to his care, and thus both he and his charge had nearly gone to the bottom. This zealous person had general instructions, that whenever guns were fired, or any other circumstance occurred likely to shake the chronometer, he was to hold it in his

hand, to prevent the concussion deranging its works. As soon, therefore, as the poor ship dashed against the rocks, the clerk's thoughts naturally turned exclusively on the time-piece. He caught up the precious watch, and ran on deck ; but being no swimmer, was obliged to cling to the mizen-mast, where he stuck fast, careless of every thing but his important trust. When the ship fell over, the mast became nearly horizontal, and he managed to creep along till he reached the mizen-top, where he seated himself in some trepidation, grinning like a monkey who has run off with a cocoa-nut, till the spar gave way, and he was plunged, chronometer and all, right overboard. Every eye was now turned to the spot, to see whether this most public-spirited of scribes was ever to appear again ; when to the great joy of all hands, he emerged from the waves —watch still in hand ! but it was not without great difficulty that he was dragged into one of the boats, half drowned.

With the exception of this fortunate chronometer, and the Admiral's dispatches, which the captain had secured when the ship first struck, every thing on board was lost.

The pinnace now contained seventy-nine men and one woman, the cutter forty-two, and the gig eighteen, with which cargoes they barely floated. Captain Hickey, of course, was the last man who left the wreck ; though such had become the respect and affection felt for him by his crew, that those who stood along with him on the last vestige of the ship, evinced great reluctance at leaving their commander even for a moment in such a perilous predicament. So speedy, indeed, was the work of destruction, that by the time the captain reached the boat, the wreck had almost entirely "melted into the yest of waves." As she went down, the crew gave her three hearty cheers, and then finally abandoned the scattered fragments of what had been their house and home for nearly seven years.

The fog still continued as thick as ever ; and as the binnacles had both been washed overboard, no compass could be procured. The wind also being still light, there was great difficulty in steering in a straight line. Had there been a breeze, it would perhaps have been easier to have shaped a course. In this dilemma a resource was hit upon, which, for a time, answered pretty well to guide them. It being known, loosely, before leaving the wreck, in what direction the land was situated, the three boats were placed in a row pointing that way. The sternmost boat then quitted her station in the rear, and pulled ahead till she came in a line with the other two boats, but took care not to go so far as to be lost in the fog ; the boat which was now furthest astern then rowed ahead, as the first had done ; and so on, doubling along, one after the other. This tardy method of proceeding answered only for a time ; for at length they found themselves completely at a loss which way to steer. Precisely at this moment of greatest need, an old quarter-master (Samuel Shanks by name) recollected that at the end of his watch-chain there hung a small compass-seal. This precious discovery being announced to the other boats by a joyous shout from the pinnace, and the compass being speedily handed into the gig, to the captain, it was placed on the top of the chronometer; so nobly saved by the clerk. As this instrument worked on jimbles, the little needle remained upon it sufficiently steady for steering the boats within a few points.

The course now secured insured their hitting the land, from which they had been steering quite wide. Before reaching the shore, they fell in with an old fisherman, who piloted them to a bight called Portuguese Cove, where they all landed in safety, at the distance of twenty miles from the town of Halifax.

The fishermen lighted great fires, to warm their shivering guests, most of whom being very lightly clad, and all, of course, dripping wet, were in a very sorry predicament ; many of them, also, were miserably cramped by close packing in the boats. Some of the men, especially of those who entered the boats last, having been obliged to swim for their lives, had thrown off everything but their trousers ; so that the only respectably-dressed person out of the whole party was Old Shanks, the owner of the watch and compass-seal,—a steady hard-a-weather sailor, who throughout took the whole affair as deliberately as if shipwreck had been an every-day occurrence. He did not even take off his hat, except, indeed, to give his good ship a cheer as she went to the bottom.

Their subsequent measures were soon decided upon. The captain carried the three boats round to the harbour, taking with him the men who had suffered most from fatigue, and those who were worst off for clothes. The officers then set out with the rest, to march across the country to Halifax, in three divisions, keeping together with as much regularity as if they had been proceeding upon some previously-arranged piece of service. Very few of the party could boast of shoes, an inconvenience which was felt more severely than it would otherwise have been, from their having to trudge over a country but partially cleared of wood. Notwithstanding all this, there was not a single straggler ; and the whole ship's company, officer, man, and boy, assembled in the evening at Halifax, in as exact order as if their ship had met with no accident.

I have been more particular in describing this shipwreck, from its appearing to offer several uncommon and some useful details, well worthy, I think, of the notice of practical men, in every profession.

It is rather an unusual combination of disasters for a ship to be so totally wrecked, as to be actually obliterated from the face of the waters, in the course of a quarter of an hour, in fine weather, in the day-time, on well-known rocks, and close to a light-house ; but without the loss of a single man, or the smallest accident to any one person on board.

In the next place, it is highly important to observe, that the lives of the crew, in all probability, would not, and perhaps could not, have been saved, had the discipline been, in the smallest degree, less exactly maintained. Had any impatience been manifested by the people to rush into the boats, or had the captain not possessed sufficient authority to reduce the numbers which had crowded into the pinnace, when she was still resting on the booms, at least half of the crew must have lost their lives.

It was chiefly, therefore, if not entirely, to the

personal influence which Captain Hickey possessed over the minds of all on board, that their safety was owing. Their habitual confidence in his fortitude, talents, and professional knowledge, had, from long experience, become so great, that every man in the ship, in this extremity of danger, instinctively turned to him for assistance, and seeing him so cheerfully and so completely master of himself, they relinquished to his well-known and often-tried sagacity the formidable task of extricating them from the impending peril. It is at such moments as these, indeed, that the grand distinction between man and man is developed, and the full ascendancy of a powerful and well-regulated mind makes itself felt The slightest hesitation on the captain's part, the smallest want of decision, or any uncertainty as to what was the very best thing to be done, if betrayed by a word or look of his, would have shot, like an electric spark, through the whole ship's company—a tumultuous rush would have been made to the boats—and two out of the three, if not all, must have been swamped, and every man in them drowned.

Captain Hickey and his crew had been serving together in the same ship for many years before, in the course of which period they had acquired so thorough an acquaintance with one another, that this great trial, instead of loosening the discipline, only augmented its compactness, and thus enabled the commander to bring all his knowledge, and all the resources of his vigorous understanding, to bear at once, with such admirable effect, upon the difficulties by which he was surrounded.

There are some men who actually derive more credit from their deportment under the severest losses, than others can manage to earn by brilliant success; and it may certainly be said that Captain Hickey is one of these; for, although he had the great misfortune to lose his ship, he must ever enjoy the noble satisfaction of knowing, that his skill and firmness, rendered effective by the discipline he had been so many years in perfecting, enabled him to save the lives of more than a hundred persons, who, but for him, in all human probability, must have perished with their hapless chief.

CHAPTER XI.

BLOCKADING A NEUTRAL PORT.

In the summer of 1804, His Majesty's ships Leander and Cambrian were ordered to proceed off New York, to watch the motions of two French frigates lying in that harbour. On board of one of these, I forget which, Jerome Buonaparte had taken his passage to Europe.

The plan of lying off a neutral port to watch for the departure of an enemy riding at anchor within it, is, I believe, still considered, by some people, a measure of questionable propriety in a national point of view. It is one of those topics, however, which will probably never be quite settled; as circumstances must arise in every war to render it less inexpedient to risk offending a neutral power, on a doubtful point of international usage, than to suffer an enemy to escape. Be the political aspect of this point, however, what it may, there can be no doubt of the excessive and very reasonable annoyance of such a proceeding to the neutral nation, whose rights of hospitality are thus, more or less, virtually infringed. It is pretty certain, I believe, that our lying so long off the harbour of New York, blockading these two French ships, contributed materially to foster those angry feelings against us, which some years afterwards broke out in open war.

The blockading service at any time is a tedious one; but upon this occasion we contrived to enliven it in a manner, which, whether legitimate or not, was certainly highly exciting, and sometimes rather profitable to us.

New York, every one knows, is the great seaport of America, into which, and out of which, many dozens of ships sail daily. With the outward-bound vessels we had little or nothing to do; but with those which came from foreign parts, especially from France, then our bitter enemy, we took the liberty—the Americans said the improper liberty—to interfere. I speak not of French ships, or those which avowed themselves to be such, and hoisted enemy's colours; for of these we, of course, made prize, without scruple, whenever we could catch them beyond the limits of the American neutrality. But this very rarely happened; and the ships we meddled with, so much to the displeasure of the Americans, were those which, to outward appearance, belonged to citizens of the United States, but on board which, we had reason, good or bad, to suspect there was cargo owned by the enemy. Nothing seems to be so easy as to forge a ship's papers, or to swear false oaths; and accordingly, a great deal of French property was imported into America, in vessels certainly belonging to the United States, but covered, as it was called, by documents implying an American or neutral right in it. In the very same way, I suppose, much Spanish property was, for a long course of years, imported into South America, in English bottoms, when Spain was at war with her colonies. England, in that case, acted the part of a neutral, and learned, in like manner, for the lucre of gain, to trifle with all the obligations of an oath. During the period of Buonaparte's continental system, especially, about the year 1810, many persons in England engaged largely in what was called the licensed trade, the very essence of which was false swearing, false papers, and the most unprincipled collusion of every kind. A horrible way of making money, of which the base contamination, in the opinion of some of our best merchants, is not yet quite washed away. So that poor Bony, directly and indirectly, has enough to answer for!

At the time I speak of, 1804, when we were stationed off New York, and the French and English nations were at loggerheads, Jonathan very properly stepped in to profit by the fray, exactly as John Bull afterwards did when Old and New Spain were at war—except, indeed, that in the contraband, or covered carrying trade with the revolted Spanish colonies, we had to share the profits with our Transatlantic brethren, while the two belligerents, shutting their eyes to their own true interest, allowed others to run off with the advantages.

All this looks simple enough on paper; and a moment's reflection shows that such must ever be the consequence of a similar state of things. For

when shrewd nations, like the United States, have the skill to keep out of the fight in which others are engaged, they are of course enabled to play into the hands of the different parties, whose whole thoughts are occupied in injuring one another, instead of interchanging benefits. The adroit neutral, by watching his opportunity, can always minister to the several necessities of the combatants, sometimes to one, sometimes to the other, as the payment is good or bad, and in such a manner as to be sure of his own profit, reckless at whose cost. At the same time, he must naturally lay his account with provoking the displeasure of the powers at war, who, in their turn, will doubtless do all they possibly can to prevent the neutral from lending assistance to their opponents respectively.

Conflicting nations, accordingly, have always claimed, and, as long as they can, will never cease to enforce, this right of searching neutral ships, in order to discover whether or not there be enemy's property on board. But the practice, it may easily be imagined, is full of many sore heart-burnings, and all kinds of "hard words, jealousies, and fears," which often, as old Hudibras has it, "set folks together by the ears," who ought, perhaps, never to have become foes.

Every morning, at daybreak, during our stay off New York, we set about arresting the progress of all the vessels we saw, firing off guns to the right and left, to make every ship that was running in, to heave to, or wait, until we had leisure to send a boat on board, "to see," in our lingo, "what she was made of." I have frequently known a dozen, and sometimes a couple of dozen ships, lying a league or two off the port, losing their fair wind, their tide, and worse than all, their market, for many hours, sometimes the whole day, before our search was completed. I am not now inquiring whether *all* this was right, or whether it was even necessary, but simply describing the fact.

When any circumstance in the ship's papers looked suspicious, the boarding officer brought the master and his documents to the Leander, where they were further examined by the captain; and if anything more important was then elicited, by an examination of the parties or their papers, to justify the idea that the cargo was French, and not American, as was pretended, the ship was forthwith detained. She was then manned with an English crew from the ships of war, and ordered off to Halifax, to be there tried in the Admiralty Court, or adjudicated, as the term is; and either released with or without demurrage, if proved to be truly neutral property, or condemned, if it were shown to belong to the enemy.

One can easily conceive that this sort of proceeding, in every possible case, must be vexatious to the neutral. If, in point of fact, the whole, or a portion of the ship's cargo, really belong to that ship's belligerent party, whose enemy is investigating the case, and this be clearly made out, it is still mortifying to the neutral to see the property taken away which he has undertaken to cover so effectually as to guard it from capture. If, on the other hand, the cargo be all the while, *bona fide*, the property of the neutral under whose flag it is sailing, the vexation caused by this interruption to the voyage is excessive. In the event of restoration or acquittal, the owner's loss, it is said, is seldom, if ever, adequately compensated for by the awarded damages. In most cases there are found a number of suspicious circumstances, sufficient to justify the detention, but not enough to lead to a condemnation; and in these instances the remuneration is not great.

If the case, then, be annoying in any view of it, supposing the neutral ship to have been met with on the wide ocean, what must be the aggravation when the vessel is laid hold of at the instant she has all but reached her own home! when half an hour's further sailing would have ended the voyage successfully, and put it beyond the power of either of the belligerents to have asked any questions about the nature of her objects, or the ownership of her cargo!

We detained, at that period, a good many American vessels, on the ground of having French or Spanish property on board. One of these, a very large ship from Lima, filled with cocoa, was clearly made out to be a good prize, and was condemned accordingly. Three or four others, I remember, were restored to their owners by the decision of the Admiralty Court; and two of them were forcibly recaptured by the Americans, on their way to Halifax. On board one of these ships, the master, and the few hands left in her to give evidence at the trial, rose in the night, overpowered the prize master and his crew, nailed down the hatches, and having put the helm up, with the wind on land, gained the coast before the scale of authority could be turned. In the other ship, the English officer in charge imprudently allowed himself to be drifted so near the land, that the people on the beach, suspecting what had happened, sent off armed boats in sufficient number to repossess themselves of the property. Possession in such cases being not nine, but ten points of the law, we were left to whistle for our prizes!

There was another circumstance connected with our proceedings at that time, of still more serious annoyance to the Americans, and one requiring, in its discussion, still greater delicacy of handling. I shall not, indeed, presume to enter upon its very difficult merits, but, as before, content myself with merely describing the circumstances. I need hardly mention that I allude to the impressment of those seamen whom we found serving on board American merchant ships, but who were known to be, or supposed to be, British subjects. What the strict letter of the law is now, I am not aware—I mean, what would be considered the "law of usage" in the event of another war. But I presume we should act pretty much as we did before, and consequently incur the risk, whatever that might be, of converting a neutral into an enemy, rather than agree to relinquish our right to command the services of any British-born subject, whenever we found him on the high seas. At all events, it seems quite clear that, while we can hold it, we will never give up the right of search, or the right of impressment. We may and ought, certainly, to exercise so disagreeable a power with such temper and discretion as not to provoke the enmity of any friendly nation.

But at the time I speak of, and on board our good old ship the Leander, whose name, I was grieved, but not surprised, to find, was still held in detestation three or four and twenty years

afterwards at New York, I am sorry to own that we had not much of this discretion in our proceedings; or, rather, we had not enough consideration for the feelings of the people we were dealing with. We have since learned to respect them more—or, as they prefer to express it, they have since taught us to respect them: be it either way, it matters not much; and if it please the Americans more to say they have instructed us in this point of good manners, than to allow that we have come to a knowledge of better habits, well and good. I am grievously afraid, however, that if we should again be placed in like circumstances, and our ships of war are in want of men, whilst English sailors are to be found in numbers on board American ships, we shall always fall upon some good excuse for impressing His Majesty's liege subjects, catch them where we may. However civilly we may then set about this duty—as a duty it certainly will appear—the old charges, I fear, will again be raised up against us.

To place the full annoyance of these matters in a light to be viewed fairly by English people, let us suppose that the Americans and French were to go to war, and that England for once remained neutral—an odd case, I admit, but one which might happen. Next, suppose that a couple of French frigates were chased into Liverpool, and that an American squadron stationed itself off that harbour to watch the motions of these French ships, which had claimed the protection of our neutrality, and were accordingly received into "our waters,"—I ask, "would this blockade of Liverpool be agreeable to us or not?"

Even if the blockading American frigates did nothing but sail backwards and forwards across the harbour's mouth, or occasionally run up and anchor abreast of the town, it would not, "I guess," be very pleasant to be thus superintended. If, however, the American ships, in addition to this legitimate surveillance of their enemy, were to detain off the port, with equal legitimacy of usage, and within a league or so of the light-house, every British vessel coming from France, or from a French colony; and if, besides looking over the papers of these vessels, to see whether all was regular, they were to open every private letter, in the hope of detecting some trace of French ownership in the cargo, what should we say? And if, out of some twenty ships arrested daily in this manner, one or two of our own were to be completely diverted from their course, from time to time, and sent off under a prize-master to New York for adjudication, I wonder how the Liverpool folks would like it? But if, in addition to this perfectly regular and usual exercise of a belligerent right on the part of the Americans, under such circumstances, we bring in that most awkward and ticklish of questions, the impressment of seamen, let us consider how much the feeling of annoyance, on the part of the English neutral, would be augmented.

Conceive, for instance, that the American squadron, employed to blockade the French ships in Liverpool, were short handed, but, from being in daily expectation of bringing their enemy to action, it had become an object of great consequence with them to get their ships manned. And suppose, likewise, that it were perfectly notorious to all parties, that, on board every English ship arriving or sailing from the port in question, there were several American citizens, but calling themselves English, and having in their possession "protections," or certificates to that effect, sworn to in regular form, but well known to be false, and such as might be bought for *4s. 6d.* any day. Things being in this situation, if the American men-of-war off the English port were then to fire at and stop every ship, and, besides overhauling her papers and cargo, were to take out any seamen, to work their own guns withal, whom they had reason, or supposed, or said they had reason, to consider American citizens, or whose country they guessed, from dialect or appearance; I wish to know with what degree of patience this would be submitted to on the Exchange at Liverpool, or elsewhere in England?

It signifies nothing to say that such a case could not occur, as the Americans do not impress seamen; for all who have attended to such subjects know well enough, that if they come to be engaged in a protracted war, especially at a distance from their own shores, there is no other possible way by which they can keep their armed ships manned. This, however, is not the point now in discussion. I merely wish to put the general case broadly before our own eyes, in order that we may bring it distinctly home to ourselves, and then see whether or not the Americans had reason for their indignation.

The truth is, they had very good reason to be annoyed; and if the guiding practical maxim amongst nations be, that "might makes right," as I conceive it always has been, and ever will be, so long as powder and shot exist, with money to back them, and energy to wield them,—then we really cannot pretend to find fault with the Americans, because they took advantage, or tried to take advantage, of that moment when our "right" being the same, our "might" appeared to be waning. I allude to their declaring war against us in 1812, when we, fighting single-handed, in the cause of European independence, were so hard pressed by Napoleon and others. For the Americans to have taken an earlier share in the struggle against us, when we were lords of the ascendant, would have been the extremity of Quixotism. But when John Bull was assailed on all hands by numbers, and his strength exhausted by long contests, albeit in the cause of liberty, which his brother Jonathan professes to adore, he, Jonathan, would have been a fool, a character which he certainly never was accused of enacting, if he had not taken advantage of the moment to try his strength. The provocation we gave was certainly considerable, and the retort, it must be owned, very dexterously managed. The result, I trust, is, that things are on a better footing than before; both parties have learned civility and caution, and they will not agree the worse on that account. To forgive and forget, is the old English maxim, as our friends well know. Let them imitate us in this respect, and they will be all the happier, and not a whit less powerful.

In putting a parallel case to ours off New York, and supposing Liverpool to be blockaded by the Americans, on the ground of their watching some French ships, I omitted to throw in one item, which is necessary to complete the parallel, and make it fit the one from which it is drawn.

Suppose the blockading American ships off Liverpool, in firing a shot ahead of a vessel they wished to examine, had accidentally hit, not that vessel, but a small coaster, so far beyond her, that she was not even noticed by the blockading ships. And suppose, further, this unlucky chance-shot to have killed one of the crew on board the said English ship: the vessel would, of course, proceed immediately to Liverpool with the body of their slaughtered countryman; and in fairness it may be asked, what would have been the effect of such a spectacle on the population of England, more particularly if such an event had occurred at the moment of a general election, when party politics, raging on this very question of foreign interference, was at its height?

This is not an imaginary case; for it actually occurred in 1804, when we were blockading the French frigates in New York. A casual shot from the Leander hit an unfortunate sloop's main-boom; and the broken spar striking the mate, John Pierce by name, killed him instantly. The sloop sailed on to New York, where the mangled body, raised on a platform, was paraded through the streets, in order to augment the vehement indignation, already at a high pitch, against the English.

Now, let us be candid to our rivals; and ask ourselves whether the Americans would have been worthy of our friendship, or even of our hostility, had they tamely submitted to indignities which, if passed upon ourselves, would have roused, not only one seaport, but the whole country, into a towering passion of nationality?

CHAPTER XII.

THE SCHOOLMASTER AFLOAT.

The union of abstract or theoretical study with actual practice, is one of the most important characteristics of a naval life; and the distinction is rendered still more remarkable, from its extending throughout the whole range of an officer's career, from the very hour he enters the service as a midshipman, till he ends his life in battle, like Nelson, or worn out, like Collingwood, in command of a fleet. Every officer in the Navy, in short, who really cares about his business at all, may be said to be perpetually learning his profession, and as perpetually putting in practice what he learns; for by no exertion of talents or industry can he ever expect to reach the top of his knowledge, or that point where further instruction will no longer prove useful to himself and his country. A naval man, therefore, however professionally employed, is kept constantly alive and active, as far as the pursuit of information is concerned. For there is a permanent and high bounty, as it were, upon every fresh acquirement; and the advantages of each new attainment are so great, and generally so soon felt, that, with a little address on the part of the higher authorities, there can never be wanting opportunities for bringing such information into useful operation. As, therefore, there is very seldom any want of stimulus amongst the young men on board a well-regulated ship, it becomes of great consequence, not only to create and keep alive this impulse, but also to give it a right direction, and so to guide its energies, that the result may be productive of benefit, not merely to the officers themselves, but to their country.

The nature of the sea-service is such, that it must be entered at an early age, otherwise its duties are sure to disgust. But unless a boy happens to be one of those prodigies, who, in the long-run, seldom turn out worth sixpence! he must almost necessarily be very ignorant when he commences his sea-life. Once afloat, however, the occupations of the ship are quite sufficient to keep his body in healthful exercise, and the variety of new objects he sees will generally prevent his mind from ever wearying. Yet unless some consistent, uniform means be taken to cherish his nascent mental energies, and to give a right direction to that desire for knowledge which belongs to his age, and, above all, to found and regulate his principles; the chances are but too great that he may speedily run to weeds and waste, in spite of the best possible disposition on his part to do right.

Persons who have not had the means of becoming acquainted with the dangers that beset a young man, on his first going to sea, and even for some time afterwards, can form no adequate conception of the risk which he incurs of having his taste and morals corrupted, and the best faculties of his mind not only neglected, but often irretrievably shaken. Nor must people hope, that by sending a boy under the protection of the captain, or one of the officers, these evils will always be warded off. The danger may be lessened, it is true; but it cannot be effectually guarded against, and for a very plain reason. In ships actively employed, hardly any officer has leisure to devote the requisite amount of time to the superintendence of a boy under his charge; and still less frequently has he either capacity or temper for the arduous task of education. To which it may be added, that, even under favourable circumstances, the duties of an officer, and his assigned position in the ship, generally keep him too much apart from the midshipmen to enable him to exercise, to the extent we could wish, that degree of watchfulness over his protégé's habits, without which the utmost care may often prove ineffectual in maintaining his young friend in the right path.

The kindness of a captain, or any other of the officers, certainly goes a long way to render the situation of a youngster on board ship happy, and useful. But these advantages can be fully extended only to a few cases, even in ships where the captain's disposition has that kindly bent which takes delight in opening his cabin to the midshipmen, and prompts him to go out of his way in other respects, to make them pleased with their situation. It is deeply to be regretted, indeed, that in most ships in His Majesty's service, no such advantages can be reckoned upon; and unless there be something more direct and imperative than the mere good-will of the captain, too many youngsters will inevitably be neglected, not only to their own loss and eventual sorrow, but to the manifest injury of the public interests.

There is a very mistaken notion entertained by many officers in the Navy, who conceive that parental care and kindness to the midshipmen under their command, do not fall within the strict line of their duty. And this would not be unreasonable, if it were the practice to govern His

Majesty's ships exclusively by the strict letter of the Printed Instructions and the Articles of War. But how could the service go on for a single day on such principles? Every thing falls within the line of a captain's duty which contributes to the advancement of the public good; and who shall say that an attention to the morals and manners of those young men, who are destined to command the ships and fleets of the country, is not an object of vital public interest?

There is no law, strictly so called, by which parents on shore are compelled to educate their children, or to show them kindness; but what father of a family will plead this omission in the statutes as an excuse for neglecting his family? Yet the case is even stronger on board ship, where the dangers of evil communication—that corrupter of good manners—are far greater, and where the value of kindness is enhanced a hundred-fold, by the many hardships and privations to which the poor boys must be exposed.

To say that these young persons are merely public servants—that they must take their chance with the rest of the crew—and that a captain has enough to do besides making himself a dry-nurse for every child sent on board his ship, is a bitter and most unworthy mockery, implying little genuine public spirit, and still less private feeling.

At the very best, as I have already said, the captain cannot accomplish all the objects that could be desired; but in every case, even of the most actively employed ships, the exercise of his authority, in a generous and kindly spirit, must contribute, in a most essential degree, not only to the present comfort, but to the solid virtue of the youngsters on board. Indeed, these two results must always go together, afloat as well as on shore; and exactly in proportion as the captain can ameliorate the habits of his young officers, or win them to a conviction of the value of acting upon principle, and from a sense of duty, so will they become happier men and more useful public servants.

It has already been stated, that a captain's time is generally so much taken up with official duties, that, even if he be so inclined, he cannot devote an adequate portion of his attention to the moral care of the important class of rising officers of whom we are speaking. But it requires only a slight acquaintance with any description of public business to show, that although a commanding officer may often not be able to execute a required task himself, he may usefully superintend its right performance by another. Indeed, it will happen, in most cases, that such work will actually be better done by another person, under his inspection, than it could have been done by the chief himself. This observation applies, in a remarkable manner, to the numerous and varied duties on board a man-of-war. Nor is it too much to say, that in a well-regulated ship the captain is bound not to attempt the execution of all, or, perhaps, any of these duties himself, but rather to devote his attention to their right performance by the officers especially named to such charges.

It is chiefly on this ground, and in the same spirit by which every other duty is carried on afloat, that I consider it of so much importance to the well-being of the Navy that the commanding officer should be provided with a duly-qualified assistant in one most essential department of his discipline, which is at present absolutely vacant. He cannot possibly, by any exertion, execute the duties of instruction in his own person; nor, as things are now constituted, is there any other person on board to whom he can delegate them; and the consequences, we all know, are in many cases every way deplorable.

Fortunately, the remedy for these evils appears neither difficult of discovery, nor costly in its application; and as it has had the advantage of frequent and successful trial, it is to be hoped that, ere long, its adoption as a matter of official regulation will become general throughout the Navy.

It must have occurred to every one who has attended personally to this subject, that the duty of superintending the progress of youngsters circumstanced as the mids are, to any good purpose, can be performed only by a person who shall have this exclusive business to attend to, or, at all events, whose chief duty and interest it shall be. Neither can there be a doubt, that, if a proper salary were given, in connexion with some advantages which would cost the country little or nothing, a class of officers, fully competent to this high and important task, might soon be created, and placed as much at the disposal of the administrators of our naval affairs, as any other description of public servants. I use the word officers instead of schoolmasters, because it appears to me quite essential to the success of the measure under consideration, that the person having the superintendence of the young gentlemen in one of His Majesty's ships should be permanently placed, as nearly as possible, in the situation eventually to be filled by his pupils. If he be not so placed, he can never become practically familiar with those professional feelings and habits, the value of which it is his duty to teach, in connexion with those still more important principles and sacred duties, peculiarly his province to inculcate as the groundwork of the whole scheme of moral discipline.

Many of these useful refinements, however, cannot be looked for in men who do not fill situations in which alone, as all experience shows, they can be acquired; it therefore becomes indispensable, as I have said before, that the instructors of our naval youth should be made to fell that they really are officers, to all intents and purposes, not only in rank, but in the enjoyment of every other technical advantage possible.

A preceptor, under any circumstances, but most particularly on board ship, in order to have the power of *doing* any permanent good, should not only respect himself, but ought to be supported by the higher authorities in such a way as to command, at all times, the respect, not alone of his pupils, but likewise of the people about them. Unfortunately, few things can be more inefficient, or, generally speaking, more ridiculous, than the present situation of a schoolmaster afloat; and until his position there be materially improved, it is almost hopeless to look for any good results.

"The average pay of schoolmasters," observes a well-informed writer, "is about £50 and their provisions. They rank with the ship's cook, mess with the midshipmen, and have no cabin. With so small a pittance, and with such rank and accommodations, it would be unreasonable to suppose that a very highly-educated class of persons could be obtained; and consequently we

find that many ships are totally unprovided. Where they are found, they are often persons who make it convenient to serve for a time; but it rarely happens that they continue in the business. No prospect of advancement is held out to them, nor are they in any way recompensed or provided for when their term of service is complete. The naval instructions ordain that 'the schoolmaster is not only to instruct his pupils *in mathematics*, but to watch over their general conduct, and to attend to their morals; and if he shall observe any disposition to immorality or debauchery, or any conduct unbecoming an officer or a gentleman, he is to represent it to the captain.' This appears very plausible in the printed instructions; but its execution, under the circumstances just detailed, must be pronounced chimerical. It may readily be supposed, how totally inconsistent with this dignified surveillance, living in the same hole with their pupils must be, particularly when the democratical form of government, or club-law, which is generally to be found there, is remembered. The habits and awkwardness of a landsman are of themselves a constant theme of irresistible ridicule with their joyous associates; and when it is considered that the highest authority often finds it difficult to restrain their happy thoughtlessness and practical jokes, what, it may be asked, must be expected to be the fate of an unhappy equal?"*

This is by no means an exaggerated picture of the situation of a schoolmaster on board a man-of-war; and whatever the remedy be, I believe there can hardly exist a difference of opinion amongst professional men as to the great improvement of which this department of the service is susceptible.

In the able paper above quoted, the well-known advantages of uniting the two situations of chaplain and schoolmaster, are stated with considerable force; the practical good results, indeed, which have attended many of the experiments already made of that union, are so generally recognised, that in a short time we may expect to see it established in every ship. But the pay of either of these situations is at present too trifling to render it a sufficient motive for a man of abilities and classical knowledge to go on board ship. The consequence is, either that most of our vessels are left without such instructors; or that these stations are not very well filled; or, finally, if occupied by qualified persons, they are held by men who accept them only for a time, till something better shall offer.

In the Leander, on the Halifax station, we had an excellent schoolmaster for about a year, when the situation of professor of one of the colonial colleges happening to fall vacant, we lost his services immediately; and although ours was the commander-in-chief's ship, on board of which the inducements were considerably beyond the average, we could never afterwards procure a proper person to fill the office. The youngsters, therefore, who, as usual, flocked under the Admiral's flag, were left ever afterwards completely adrift.

* I quote from a paper on the State of Education in the British Navy, printed in the United Service Journal, Part XI., for October, 1830. The performance and the promise of the very rising officer who wrote this article, (Capt. the Hon. F. de Ros), help to furnish the fairest practical answer to those who object to the early advancement of young men of rank in the Navy.

What would become of the arrangements of a man-of-war, I should like to ask, if any one of the other officers—the first lieutenant for instance, the purser, or the boatswain—were at liberty, without warning, to quit the ship the instant he saw an opportunity of bettering himself? And yet, if there existed no prospective benefit in these officers remaining, on what principle could we expect to maintain any permanent hold over them? How then can we wonder that chaplains and schoolmasters, whom as yet we have taken no pains to form into a distinct, respectable, and well-paid class of officers, should scruple so little about abandoning a service in which no proper means have yet been adopted to give them, as in the case of every other officer, a determinate life-interest?

The obvious remedy, as has been urged a hundred times, seems to lie in this plan of uniting the situations of chaplain and schoolmaster, and joining the pay of the two. In all probability, the truest economy will be found in still further augmenting this pay, so as to make it really worth the while of properly-educated men to look to it, not merely for a season, but as a fixed provision. The discomforts, however, of a midshipman's berth, to all but the mids themselves, who are hastening to get out of it, are so intolerable, that hardly any amount of pay will ever be thought a full recompense for the sacrifices which a person grown up to man's estate, and properly qualified in other respects, would be called upon to make, were he required to mess in the cockpit. In the event, therefore, of such union of offices, the gentlemen in whom they are joined ought to bear a regular commission, mess with the commissioned officers, and walk the weather side of the deck; perhaps also he might advantageously wear a suitable uniform. At all events, he ought to possess a distinct rank, and be considered as essentially a part of the ship's complement as the surgeon, purser, or any other officer in the civil department of the fleet.

People unacquainted with the nature of naval discipline may smile, perhaps, at some of the privileges glanced at above, as essential to the right exercise of power. But long experience has shown, that the distinctions in question are the recognised symbols or indexes of due subordination and general good order. They unquestionably contribute, indirectly, but powerfully, to the maintenance of that prompt and effective obedience, and respect to constituted authority, which, combined with self-respect, go so far to form the sinews of naval strength. If, therefore, it be of real utility to have the schoolmaster's work at least as well executed as that of the other officers, it surely follows that he ought to be placed in a situation to command, not merely the dogged attention of the midshipmen, but in one which will insure the official reverence of the boys, together with a proportionate degree of consideration from those whom they command. If these minute particulars in balancing the scales of discipline be not duly attended to, the respect of the pupils will dwindle into familiarity; and the schoolmaster, if he be not a strong-minded person, may end by losing his own self-confidence. All lessons then become a farce, and the teacher either relapses into a useless appendage to the ship, or, if forcibly sustained by the stern autho-

rity of the captain, he is apt to degenerate into a mere pedagogue.

It may safely be laid down as a pretty general rule, that to render any man of much use, he must be placed permanently in a station, which of itself, and by the ordinary workings of the established order of things, will insure attention both from superiors and inferiors. Without this adjustment, there can be no good service performed any where, either on land or at sea.

It is sometimes not sufficiently recollected, that schooling on board ship differs materially from what it is on shore; for it not only treats of very different matters, but has other objects in view, both immediate and remote. Before a young person actually engages in a profession, the great purpose of a school appears to consist in mere training, that is to say, in carrying his faculties through a course of preparatory discipline, without any more specific object than mental exercise. But when the youth is once fairly embarked in the pursuit which is to furnish employment for his life, an immediate modification takes place. At all events, the system it has been found necessary to follow at sea is then placed in distinct contrast to that previously observed at school.

On shore, education and business are two separate things, one of which does not begin till the other ends; while, on board ship, the two always go hand in hand. As the lessons of the teacher afloat may generally be put in practice immediately, and the actual utility of theoretical knowledge can be exhibited on the spot, a gradually increasing impulse may be given to the whole course of nautical studies. A boy who has learned what the word Latitude means, and what is the method of obtaining it, instantly runs upon deck, takes a quadrant in his hand, observes the sun's meridional altitude, and is filled with amaze and delight on discovering within what small limits he has been able to determine the ship's place relatively to the equator. Next day he sets to work with increased eagerness to conquer the more difficult problem of finding the Longitude, which he has immediate opportunities of investigating practically. The theory of Gunnery, likewise, when studied by itself, is frequently found to be intricate, and often far from satisfactory; but when its results can be brought to the test of immediate experiment, the aspect assumed by this important pursuit becomes totally different. How few officers, for instance, understand correctly the meaning of the elementary term Point Blank, or have any useful conception of the mathematical principles which it involves? How often do we hear rational people gravely assuming that the shot rises between the gun and the point-blank mark! The laws which regulate the action of fluids directed against plane surfaces are by no means easily explained when grappled with alone; but, when brought to bear on the use of the rudder, or the trim of the sails, there is hardly a boy afloat who fails to appreciate the value of true science over what is called 'rule of thumb;' or rather, who may not soon be taught to feel the mighty advantage of uniting the two, so as to make theory and practice mutually assist each other*.

* I beg to recommend my young naval friends to read the article 'Seamanship' in the Encyclopædia Britannica. This treatise, which is written by the celebrated Professor John Robison, of Edinburgh, who was five or six years a midshipman, is the best I know on the subject, and ought to be reprinted separately.

Nearly the same thing may be said of almost every other branch of knowledge: with languages, for instance—I mean more particularly the modern languages—French, Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian, most of which are made to tell generally as soon as acquired. The Mathematics in all their wonderful branches, and Science in almost every department, furnish ample objects to fill up the leisure hours of an officer. Geography, history, and the law of nations, come into professional play at every turn. A young man, therefore, of any capacity or industry, is nearly sure of rendering himself useful in a short time, be his particular pursuits what they may, provided only that his zeal is duly encouraged by the captain, and seconded by the ready assistance of a properly qualified preceptor, whom he has been taught to respect. It must never be forgotten, however, that along with all this knowledge of a professional, literary, or scientific nature, there ought always to be mixed up instructions of a still more sacred and important description, upon which the formation of a young man's character and principles will mainly depend, whether we view him merely as an officer, or in his wider capacity as a member of the civil community.

Every one acquainted with the difficult task of bringing boys safely through the intricate labyrinth of temptations which must be encountered in the early stages of a sea-life, will acknowledge, that the superintendant of a young man's habits has little or no chance of success, unless he can secure the confidence of his pupil. I very much fear, however, that there can be little hope of establishing such a relation between them, unless the preceptor be truly the superior, not only in station, but in attainments, and unless it be his peculiar study to acquire this ascendancy over his pupil's mind, in order to the better regulation of his manners. I use the word manners in its largest sense; and it is clear that, unless the schoolmaster have leisure to keep these objects constantly in view, he cannot hope to gain the proper degree of influence over any boy's mind. As chaplain of the ship, however, his religious duties, so far from interfering with the objects alluded to, would blend admirably with all of them, and furnish the best means, and, if it were needed, the best excuse, for a judicious and parental sort of interference. To expect that any such interference of the teacher, under the present system, can be efficacious, is, I much fear, a complete delusion; and this furnishes a strong reason for uniting in one person the kindred duties of chaplain and schoolmaster. It shows, at the same time, how inefficient any such union must be, unless care is taken to secure fitting persons to fill a joint office of such delicacy.

There is still another, and by no means an unimportant benefit, which might arise to the naval service from this improvement: I mean its effect on the higher classes of officers. If there be nothing more shocking than a disreputable clergyman in a mess-room, so, on the other hand, I conceive there can be nothing more useful, in many very material respects, than the constant

companionship of a right-minded and well-educated person of this description. I say nothing of the obvious and salutary influence which his presence never fails to exercise over the manners of men, already too much disposed to laxity in their habits: but it may be well to consider, likewise, the great additional benefits which may arise to the officers from their possessing the means of instructing themselves in the different branches of knowledge, which a chaplain, regularly qualified to teach, would be able to impart.

Except on board ship, and at sea, few of the senior officers of the Navy, in war time, have the opportunity, and still fewer the means, of improving their acquaintance with those pursuits, of which, in the earlier periods of their service, they may have gained a smattering. I allude to the classics, to modern languages, and the belles-lettres generally, to the higher branches of mathematics, and to many of those sciences formerly deemed abstruse, but which have lately become popular; such as chemistry, geology, and natural history in all its departments.

The time is not remote when it was held by high naval authorities, that all or any of these refinements, instead of being useful to an officer, actually stood in his way; and, as far as they went, interfered with the due execution of his duty. Nor can it, nor ought it to be denied, that the principle of extra instruction is very apt to be carried too far, and the refining system over-done. Neither must it ever be forgotten in these discussions, that the service, that is to say, the hard, regular, seamanlike round of official duties, in all seasons and under all circumstances, ought to be the primary objects of an officer's thoughts, before which every thing else is not only to bend, but, if need be, must break. And it is chiefly on the principle of rendering an officer only the more fit for such technical routine, that any of the pursuits alluded to can ever be considered as having legitimate claims on his attention. If such studies become so engrossing as to detach his thoughts from his sterner duty; to make him a scholar instead of a seaman, a dandy instead of a disciplinarian; or if he allow himself to attend to such extraneous topics with any other view than to his improvement as a strictly professional man, he will, of course, find them, one and all, prejudicial, and such as ought not to be encouraged. Under proper regulation, however, there seems little or no danger of any thing of this description proving injurious to an officer's character, as a useful, hard-working servant of the public.

It was formerly thought, that high-born, high-bred, and even well-educated men, were less fitted to make good officers for the ordinary course of professional work, than persons who had sprung from a lower origin, or whose education was limited to the mere technicalities of the profession, and who were without taste and without manners—men of the Hawser Trunnion school, in short. But the copious experience of the late arduous war seems to have shown, both in the Army and in the Navy, that the contrary is the true state of the case. And certainly, as far as my own observation and inquiries have gone, I have found reason to believe, that those officers who are the best-informed and the best bred, and who possess most of the true spirit of gentlemen, are not only the safest to trust in command over others, but are always the readiest to yield that prompt and cheerful obedience to their superiors, which is the mainspring of good order. Such men respect themselves so justly, and value their own true dignity of character so much, and are at all times so sensitively alive to the humiliation of incurring reproach, that they are extremely cautious how they expose themselves to merited censure. From the early and constant exercise of genuine politeness, they become habitually considerate of the feelings of others; and thus, by the combined action of these great principles of manners, officers of this stamp contrive to get through far more work, and generally do it, much better, than persons of less refinement. Moreover, they consider nothing beneath their closest attention which falls within the limits of their duty; and, as a leading part of this principle, they are the most patient as well as vigilant superintendants of the labours of those placed under their authority, of any men I have ever seen. It is not that they watch their inferiors with a view to entrap and pounce upon them; but solely with the public-spirited and generous object of keeping all parties right, in the hope that by checking errors in the outset, before they have grown into crimes, the hard alternative of punishment may be avoided.

This is a pretty fair sketch of the method of acting observed by a thorough-bred, gentleman-like, well-instructed officer; and every one who has been in command, and in protracted difficulties, or has merely been employed in the ordinary course of service, will readily admit that, with the assistance of such men, every department of his duty has gone on better and more pleasantly than it could have possibly done if the persons under his command had been of a coarser and more vulgar stamp.

It is quite true that the full degree of refinement alluded to can hardly ever be fully taught on board ship, though it may often be approximated to good purpose. It is quite within our power, for example, so to train up young men that they shall gradually acquire not only that sort of knowledge, but also those habits, which experience has shown to have the most direct tendency to enlarge the understanding, and to chastise the taste. Precisely as this amount of intelligence increases, so will the capacity of an officer to do good service increase likewise; and it is absurd to suppose that he will be less inclined to do his duty well, from knowing better how to comply with its essential obligations.

Weak minds and perverse dispositions, under any system of instruction or of discipline, will, of course, defeat all these calculations; and there will ever be found many effeminate and idle persons in a fleet, who, by mistaking mere acquirements for the knowledge of how to turn them to useful account, deserve the title they receive of 'the King's hard bargains.' But, taking the average run of officers in the Navy, it may safely be expected, that if, in other respects, officers are kept to their duty, and if they themselves have a real interest in the service, the more information they can acquire upon every subject worthy of a gentleman's attention, the better will they be fitted for the performance not only of those higher exploits which all the world understand and ad-

mire, but even of those humble and unseen professional avocations, which make up by far the greater and the most important part of their daily duties.

If, then, we can furnish all ranks of our naval officers afloat with a ready and agreeable means of filling up their time, of which most of them have a good deal to spare, we may fairly hope that they will not be slow to avail themselves of the opportunities placed within their reach. In order, however, to render these measures of any extensive utility, this plan of furnishing assistance must be carried a long way. A chaplain-schoolmaster should be allowed even to the smallest class of ships, on board which, by any contrivance, the proper degree of accommodation can be obtained. And if these ideas were followed up in the admirable spirit with which some recent improvements have been carried into effect in the Navy,—for instance, in the discipline, victualling, payment of wages, ratings, and other matters,—a very great boon would be conferred on the service.

It is not likely that the measure proposed would materially augment the expenses of the fleet, if, indeed, it had that effect at all; since both a chaplain and schoolmaster are expressly allowed to all ships, from the first to the sixth class inclusive. But even supposing the expense were to be augmented, there can be no doubt, I should conceive, in the mind of any person who has reflected seriously on these subjects, that the return for such outlay would be speedy and certain. The religious, moral, and intellectual character of officers, on whose good conduct so much depends, must, in every conceivable state of things, be an object of material consequence to the country. And it were really almost a libel on the nation, to imagine it would not cheerfully agree to the additional expenditure which might be required, if the advantages be such as are here stated. There can be no truer economy, than expending money for the promotion of virtue and sound knowledge amongst this class of public servants. For the duties of naval men, it must be recollected, generally lie so far beyond the reach of ordinary scrutiny, that almost the only security we have for their good conduct rests on their own sense of honour. A dishonest officer on a foreign station might often divert from its proper purpose, by a single stroke of his pen, and without much danger of detection, more of the public money than would furnish the Navy with chaplains and schoolmasters for ten years.

It is to accomplish only one-half the great task of instruction merely to fill a boy's head with technical information; his principles and his habits ought, as far as possible, to be taken into our safe keeping. It is also greatly to be desired, that, when the period arrives at which he is expected to become, as it is called, his own master, he should find no difficulty in continuing, from choice, those pursuits to which he had previously applied himself on compulsion, or followed solely as a means of promotion. And there seems to be no method more likely to accomplish this desirable purpose, than affording the young commissioned officer the companionship of an instructor, or, at all events, of a person whose duty it should be, if required, not only to continue in the ward-room the course of information commenced in the cock-pit, but whose aim ought to be, so to modify these studies as to adapt them to the altered circumstances of the pupil, and to win his attention to their pursuit by rendering them agreeable and useful.

It is not pretended, by any means, that such a task is an easy one; on the contrary, it will require not only considerable abilities, but high attainments, and no small degree of good taste, together with a long apprenticeship of self-discipline, and an exclusive application to these arduous duties, as the grand object and business of the instructor's life.

There really appears, however, to be no situation but that of a clergyman which offers any reasonable chance of these conditions being fulfilled. And as the education of such a person is necessarily expensive, and the double office which it is proposed he should fill, one of great responsibility, labour, and difficulty, as well as one of peculiar and irremediable discomfort and privation, without any of those energetic excitements which stimulate every other class of officers to exertion, the remuneration ought clearly to be very considerable, otherwise no set of properly qualified men will ever be induced to engage permanently in its pursuit.

A distinct class of officers, of this sacred character, although as yet they do not exist, might be readily created. It is also quite essential to the success of all these measures, that the clergymen intended for the Navy should be regularly and specifically ordained for that service exclusively; and they should look to the Navy alone as the field of their duty, and not reckon it a mere stepping-stone to more agreeable and profitable preferment on shore. I am well aware that there are very considerable difficulties in the way of this proposal: but they are not, I trust, unconquerable. They have been overcome in the case of the Colonies; and why may they not in that of the Navy?

If the emoluments of the chaplain of a man-of-war were made respectable, the situation rendered as agreeable, in point of comfort, as the nature of the elements will admit of, and if the prospects of future provision were made certain, or contingent only upon a right performance of duty; there cannot, I think, be a doubt that, in a short time, there would be found an ample and steady supply of properly qualified chaplains, to execute all the high duties alluded to above.

If this important professional object were once fairly carried into effect, we should probably soon discover an improvement in the entire system of naval discipline, the best evidences of which would be, the increased efficiency of the whole service, arising out of the gradually ameliorated habits and higher intellectual cultivation, as well as improved tastes and more rational happiness, of every class of the officers, from the oldest captain down to the youngest first-class boy, just untied from his mother's apron-string.

In all that has been said, I have taken into view almost exclusively the advantages which would accrue to the officers from the adoption of this plan of uniform instruction. It is to them, individually as gentlemen, and collectively as a body, upon the certainty of whose hearty exertions the government can at all times depend, that the

country must ever look for that energetic momentum in our naval strength, upon which the national power, in this department, essentially rests. Surely, however, it is not too much to say, as a matter of experience, that the influence of a resident clergyman on board ship, wherever there is one, over the minds of the crew, is felt to be quite as salutary, when properly exercised, as it is to the labourers in any parish of the empire.

It signifies nothing to say that the structure of naval discipline is widely different from the civil administration of the land; for the very same principles, and, more or less, the very same motives to right or wrong action, must always be in play in both cases. A judicious chaplain, therefore, who, from long personal experience, shall have become acquainted with the habits, tastes, feelings, and pursuits of the seamen, may undoubtedly contribute an important share to the efficiency of the whole of our naval system. So far from interfering with, or in any way checking the strict course of nautical affairs, I conceive that the chaplain's influence, rightly exercised, acting in cordial understanding with the captain, and sanctioned by his authority, might advance the best interests of the service by greatly diminishing offences, and thus lessening the melancholy necessity of punishments *.

CHAPTER XIII.

PREPARATORY EDUCATION OF A BOY INTENDED FOR THE SEA.

I HAVE so frequently been asked to state what I conceived the best course of study for a young person intended for the Navy, that I think it may be useful briefly to repeat here the substance of the answers given to such inquiries.

If I were myself sending a boy to sea in whom I was much interested, and could make sure of placing him under the command of some brother officer on whom I could rely with perfect confidence, and who would really and truly look after him, I should unquestionably give that method the preference, by sending him to sea before he passed the age of thirteen. But if no such friendly opening should offer, and the lad could be got into the Royal Naval College at Portsmouth, I think, upon the whole, I should be disposed to let his first two years be spent there. A good deal, however, would undoubtedly depend upon the peculiar temper, strength of body, and general character of the youth himself. If he were possessed of a strong frame, showed much vigour of mind, were enthusiastically bent upon following his profession, and enjoyed that enviable cast of disposition which sees the bright side of things, and is always inclined to make the most of what turns up, I should certainly be greatly tempted to send him afloat at once, in order to grapple with real work, and to learn as early as possible how to make himself useful on the element destined to become his home for life.

Of course a boy sent so early as thirteen on board ship, would be thrown out of the way of gaining much of the valuable knowledge which he might pick up on shore, under instructors whose express business it is to teach him. But, on the other hand, he would be in the direct way of acquiring much useful professional information for future exercise in the direct line of his duty.

At the Naval College the theoretical parts only of navigation are taught, and but very little of practical seamanship, properly so called. But on board ship, the theory and the practice go on together, and, as I conceive, they always benefit one another most essentially. It is not my purpose at present to discuss why this distinction is made at the College, but I shall merely observe, that I have not yet heard any thing to satisfy me that the theory and practice of the nautico-astronomical parts might not be carried on hand in hand with great advantage to the pupils. No doubt this double course of instruction would add somewhat to the complication of the system; but there is scarcely any profession which is so complicated as ours, and I question whether it be good policy to make the preparatory education so very unlike real service, as that of the Naval College and the future life on board ship. The prodigious difference which exists between any possible modification of a sea life, and any possible modification of a shore life, is so great, that I suspect it is almost indispensable towards that entire devotion to the sea, which ought to animate every officer, that he should be broken in, very early in life, by actually serving as a mere boy afloat, and being subjected for a considerable time to the rough handling which seems necessary to the sea part of his education, at a period when he is not too old to be seriously disgusted with its elementary drudgery.

On the other hand, (supposing the actual sea is preferred to the College,) unless the captain has a real interest in the welfare of his boys, and unless there be a chaplain and schoolmaster on board, and unless the ship be tolerably well officered and disciplined, the poor boy has to run a fearful gauntlet for his manners, morals, and principles. In these important respects, there can be no question whatever that the College is the safer preparatory school of the two. And this applies with peculiar force to the establishment alluded to, when it happens to be under the excellent and even paternal management of such an officer as Captain Loring. If, however, we could only see appointed to every ship in the Navy a properly qualified chaplain and schoolmaster in one person, much more might be accomplished afloat, to remedy the serious evils arising from early contamination, which it is now well nigh impossible to guard against in the greater number of cases.

As to the general question, of what previous education is best for a boy intended for the sea, it is scarcely possible to say much that is definite, or calculated to be of practical utility. I really do not conceive that it matters essentially what a lad is taught from eleven to fifteen, beyond the mere elements and instruments, as it were, of knowledge, viz. reading, writing, and arithmetic, in all of which, of course, he ought to be very completely drilled. The grand point to aim at, as I

* P.S 1840. Since the above chapter was written, I rejoice to say, the plan suggested above has been carried into effect, in many ships in which the chaplain and naval instructor are united in one person, who has the rank of an officer, and, of course, messes in the wardroom.

conceive, is to keep his mind and his body fully and agreeably, and of course innocently, employed. It will, no doubt, be of additional value, if he can, at the same time, be employed usefully; that is to say, if his pursuits can be made in general to direct themselves towards those points which he may afterwards turn to account in the practice of real business. It would be great nonsense to deny this; but still I conceive the primary object of all education is not so much to teach this or that branch of science, or this or that language, as to cultivate the mental faculties by wholesome exercise and discipline—to foster and cherish all that is good in the disposition by due encouragement—and to check, gently but steadily, all that is bad;—in short, to encourage by every means the practice of virtue as a habit, as well as on principle.

It must ever be borne in mind, however, that knowledge, generally so called, is a very different thing from true wisdom; for while any degree of mere knowledge may be acquired without one grain of principle, there certainly can be no genuine wisdom, nor any practical virtue, nor, consequently, any hearty, disinterested, and really useful public spirit, unless the foundation consist of solid religious and moral instruction. One item in the catalogue of the evil consequences of neglecting these points, is the certain shipwreck, sooner or latter, of the pupil's peace of mind; to say nothing of the presumptuous habits of thought such insulated knowledge teaches, and that contempt of all authority which is generally fatal to his useful employment, especially in the case of an officer in the Navy.

I am not, however, writing a sermon, but merely discussing the question of preparatory instruction, and shall therefore simply re-assert, that all the rest of a boy's education will either be useless to himself or mischievous to others, unless the whole be regulated by sound religious principles. How this is to be managed, must be regulated so much by the individual temperament and tastes of the boy himself, that no rules can possibly be laid down to suit every case. A boy's mind and his feelings may, however, be trained in such a manner that he shall acquire the habit of thinking with all proper diffidence of his own powers of judging, and yet, when assailed by ingenious arguments, be able to distinguish between the sophistry of heartless and sceptical reasoners, and those substantial doctrines he has been instructed to revere as the result of authorities which admit of no dispute. How far he may be usefully forewarned and put on his guard with respect to these discussions, will depend very much on the peculiar cast and strength of his own mind. I can readily conceive cases, in which such a preparatory course might be of much utility. In one word, the end and aim of his education should be to teach our youth to feel the value of virtue on its own account, and to consider his principles not in the light of things to be argued and talked about, but as constituting essential and inseparable attributes of his whole character, as certainly as the obligations of truth pervade that branch of it which distinguishes him as an officer and a gentleman.

After saying this, I must at present decline going into any of the details of education, with which, in fact, I have but little practical acquaintance. Mathematics and modern languages are the studies which most naturally occur to one's thoughts in speaking of naval education. But even with respect to these I would say, that their early pursuit is more useful as a mental exercise than as a means of laying in a stock of knowledge to be used in the real business of the profession. To make my meaning still clearer, I would say, that if a boy intended for the sea had a fancy for studying Greek or Latin, it would be far better, even with reference to future professional utility, to indulge him in this fancy for the dead languages, than to insist upon his labouring against the grain at French or Spanish. For if his faculty for learning languages be opportunely encouraged, by allowing him to follow his leaning towards the classics, he will find no difficulty, in future years, in mastering such of the spoken dialects of Europe or Asia as it may become his duty to learn *.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE EFFECTS OF BEING WELL COMMANDED.

People who have no acquaintance with the intricacies of naval discipline can scarcely comprehend how vast a difference is made in the efficiency of a man-of-war by the character of the commander. A stranger, indeed, on first going on board a well-regulated ship, is apt to fancy the captain of little or no use; and in proportion as affairs are well ordered, so, it is not improbable, he may, for a time, be confirmed in his error. Every thing appears to go on so regularly, and so much like clockwork, that the officers and men, it might be thought, have only to follow an established routine, as the hands of a watch obey the revolutions of the wheels, and all will go right. Yet, in both cases, in order to secure good work, there must exist within, not only some powerful main-spring, to give the original impulse, but sundry nice 'balances' and 'escapement' to keep the movements uniform.

Early in the year 1805, we were made abundantly sensible of the truth of this remark, by an important change which took place in the highest office on board. From a state of languid inefficiency, we started, in a single moment, into the most vigorous activity; and from being almost the laughing-stock of the fleet, for the clumsiness of our gait, and the want of success which attended our cumbrous exertions, we soon outstripped them all, not only in the activity, but in the useful result, of our services.

Our good ship, the Leander, whose name I cannot even now write without summoning up a thousand images of early joys, and ten thousand promises of future happiness—few if any of which have been blasted—the dear old Leander was one of the handsomest ships of her class, and certainly the most delightful sea-boat that ever swam; a very duck in the water! When well used, she

* P.S. 1840. In the United Service Journals for June and August, 1839, I have entered at length into the subject of the education of naval officers, both before and after their going to sea.

would, according to the fond expression of those who sailed in her, "do any thing but speak." We proved that she could sail well, and all the world knows she could fight well; she weathered a gale of wind with any ship in the Navy, either in port with three anchors ahead, or lying to at sea under her storm stay-sails: and as for all the arts of peace, she knew them right merrily; and when the time for gaiety came, many a jolly dance shook her elastic decks. I might compare my good ship to the ponderous but graceful elephant—docile, firm, and sagacious, when properly directed. Though her motions were not so swift as those of the boastful frigates by which she was surrounded, she generally contrived, somehow, to get to the end of the journey before them all; and often lugged rich prizes into harbour, when the more dashing ships of the squadron were prancing impatiently about, over the best cruising ground on the station, in search of what we had already snapped up.

This will be seen presently. In the mean time, I may stop to remark, how very singular an effect is often produced by the mind of one person on the thoughts and actions of others. There is certainly some mysterious agency in our nautical economy, by which the genius of a commanding-officer knows how to impart a portion of its spirit to every one under his orders, so as not only to combine and direct the ordinary capacities of his crew, but, at times, almost to change their very nature.

The truth is, that man, however fond he may be of liberty, or however he may splutter about independence, is so essentially and naturally an obedient animal, that there are few things more satisfactory to his mind than being well commanded. At first sight this would seem to imply something servile in our disposition; but experience clearly proves, that there are few situations in which a man of spirit can so well maintain his real independence of character, or bring all his talents, knowledge, and industry, into such useful operation, as when he is acting under the vigilant direction of a highly-gifted superior, who is fully competent to judge of his conduct, and is willing to do justice to his merits.

This magical influence extends itself, in various shapes, to every class of men under authority: to the person who possesses abilities and is desirous of exerting them, to the inefficient, the indolent, and even to the wicked. When a person of talents is placed under an able commander, he feels confident that nothing he does will be passed without notice, and consequently that his exertions must tell to his advantage, exactly in proportion as their utility makes itself felt. This consciousness will, of course, stimulate him to fresh endeavours to excel; and from thus feeling sure that his conduct is duly appreciated, he has an immediate motive to bring his whole strength into play—an exercise which must ever produce good results. A right-minded person, thus circumstanced, will become sensible, that, so far from his office being of a servile nature, it is one in which he obliges those whom he officially obeys, to acknowledge his power. If, therefore, he be only true to himself and to his duties, he may continue as thoroughly independent as it is possible for any man to be, whatever be the nature of his situation in life.

Suppose the case differently put, and let the superior in station be the inferior in abilities or experience, or not so zealous in the execution of his duty as the man he commands. The situation of the inferior is now far from being so independent, or so well calculated to draw forth his powers as it was in the first case. The subordinate officer has no longer the same animated stimulus to exertion; for, his labours being generally unnoticed, or their result unappreciated, he is left without much encouragement to proceed in fresh endeavours to excel; while his faculties, instead of improving through generous exercise, are often deteriorated by the languid manner in which they are brought into play.

What is true of men of talents and attainments, is still more striking in the case of those whose faculties and knowledge of their business are moderate. This description of persons stand in need of much assistance to render their services really useful. They require, at all times, to have their merits, such as they are, so judiciously applied by other hands, that they themselves shall become sensible of the value of their own exertions, when well directed. As there is nothing so flattering to our self-love as an occasional touch of over-appreciation of our merits, so there is nothing better calculated to produce good fruit than this kind of commendation, if not too broad. The reason is obvious. If a commander has skill enough to enlist the sympathies of those placed under his orders, they will feel insensibly drawn on to make common cause with him; and will afterwards exert themselves strenuously to maintain that degree of importance, derived from this implied companionship in ability, which they could hardly hope to reach single-handed. Having been thus led, no matter how, to make the discovery of their own weight in the scale, they are powerfully interested in proving themselves not unworthy of such distinction. The invariable effect of these voluntary efforts is to improve the character. Such training will certainly not make a clever man out of a stupid one; but it may often render a discontented or useless man of service to himself and the state; and, instead of his continuing a wretched and hopeless being, may convert him into one who is happy and confident of success, which, alone, is something.

I suspect, however, that no one who has not been an eye-witness of the condition of a ship under the command of an ignorant, trifling, or otherwise inefficient captain, can have any notion of the mischievous effects of his misrule—or, rather, of his no-rule. Perhaps, in the long-run, almost any degree of consistent severity is preferable to the uncertain, higgledy-piggledy kind of discipline on board a man-of-war in what is called slack order. The moderately-gifted persons feeling that, in these circumstances, they have no chance of notice by any exertions of their own, speedily degenerate into a sort of vegetables, so incapable of any kind of useful exertion, that they infest the ship like the fungus called the dry-rot. This chaotic period is the holiday season of the scamps and skulkers, who then fancy their game the surest. These fellows certainly succeed in working as little as possible, and in making those about them unhappy; but, after all, without any great accession to their own comforts.

I am not now speaking of a complete state of anarchy or mutiny, but merely of that inconvenient condition of things which arises out of the command being placed in hands which are not strong enough, or not adroit enough, properly to arrange the elements which are given to them to manage. One of the evil consequences, out of many, which this state of affairs gives birth to, is the great additional amount of labour it brings unfairly on the shoulders of the well-disposed part of our floating community; a result attended by sundry other bad effects. In the first place, it encourages the idle to shirk as much duty as they well can; and this, of course, tends only to make those worse who are already bad enough. In the next place, it discourages the cheerful and willing workers, by the oppression of its injustice; a feeling which speedily takes away or deadens some of the best motives to improvement. The natural result is, that the duty is done as ill as possible, by reason of its improper distribution. The captain soon becomes dissatisfied; but being unable to make out the true cause, or unwilling to acknowledge that, at bottom, his own bad government is in fault, he naturally ascribes the imperfect execution of the work to want of exertion on the part of those whom he sees performing it, while of the skulkers he sees nothing. Thus, by his unfair censure of those who, in fact, are the most deserving of commendation, he scatters the seeds of discouragement over all the different classes exposed to his unskilful handling, and everything falls into confusion worse confounded.

I shall not at present dwell further on this topic, by contrasting it with the effects arising out of a right system of discipline, on the indolent or wicked. It will, however, be obvious to every one, that if there be any chance of such persons being amended, or their evil dispositions being tied down, and their services rendered available, it can only be when they are properly looked after; and that in such periods as those above described, every thing which is already bad about them is rendered more actively mischievous.

It may be useful, perhaps, to recollect that the same principles, or very nearly the same, which regulate the action and re-action of authority afloat, enter into the administration of all affairs on land. Probably, no person is so low in the world, as not to have occasion to exercise, in a greater or less degree, some of the attributes of a commander in the course of every day of his life. If a man's share of the business of the world be small, and easy of performance, it is still more incumbent on him to exercise this his fraction of authority with propriety, as there is plainly less excuse for his executing so simple a duty ill. If, however, his occupations be considerable, he will certainly discover how important it is to possess the hearty co-operation of the persons under his orders, and how essential methodical arrangement is to his success. The civil government of a great empire appears, to uninitiated people, such a huge task, that they are totally at a loss to conceive how a prime minister can find time to eat his dinner; still less how he can manage to move about in society, apparently quite at his ease. But their wonder would diminish if they were to apply to the affairs of the nation, the rules above adverted to, under the guidance of which their own domestic establishment is managed. Yet their admiration of the great statesman would only increase as they became sensible of his skill in generalising those maxims, and in applying them over such a wide field of human action. In every department of life, indeed, there must always be more or less of discipline; and although the ostensible head of each division of society, in a house, in a nation at large, or in a ship, ought always to be the most influential person, as having most good and evil in his power, there is no one under him, however insignificant he may be thought, who may not, by his conduct, modify the exertions of those above or below him either to useful or to mischievous purpose.

We arrived at Bermuda on the 19th of January, 1805, after a passage of ten days, from Halifax. On the 21st, while we were lying, quietly moored, in Murray's anchorage, a brig was seen to stand off and on, just outside the belt of coral reefs to the eastward of the roadstead. She had a weft flying at the fore-topgallant-masthead, indicating a wish to communicate with us. A boat, of which I was the midshipman, was accordingly despatched to her. On our going alongside, a gentleman, without asking leave, or speaking a single word, stepped into the boat; and as soon as a portmanteau and writing-desk, which constituted his whole luggage, were handed in, he called out—

"Shove off!" and turning to me, said—

"That's the Leander, is it not?"

"Yes, sir," I replied, with a feeling of involuntary respect, inspired by the decided manner and tone of voice of this mysterious stranger.

"Take me on board, then," he continued, with an air of authority that made me hitch half a yard forward along the stern-sheets of the boat, while he placed himself right amidships. He did not speak a word all the way; and, for my part, I was so much awed, that for the life of me I could not get a sentence across my lips, though I made sundry attempts.

"Who's that? who's that?" eagerly asked a dozen of the mids, as soon as I came up the side. I could not tell, except that he was certainly some great knob or other; for he seemed quite at home, and ordered the boat about as if he had been the captain. And our captain, accordingly, he proved. He had brought his commission for the Leander in his pocket, and was, in fact, but a few weeks from England. It appeared, that the instant he received his appointment from the Admiralty, he had ordered a post-chaise, in which he set off for the coast, and got on board the first vessel sailing for the West Indies willing to touch at Bermuda. Owing to his activity he lost not a single hour; and the sequel will show how useful a lesson this sort of energy may teach. Our new skipper was soon installed; and his easy-going predecessor scarcely on shore, before a totally new leaf was turned over on board the 'old barky.' I well remember that, the very next morning, after breakfast, one of the sailors having got into a scrape of rather a grave nature, was called to the quarter-deck before his new commander. The offence was promptly, but most patiently investigated. As soon as it was clearly made out that the unhappy man had committed an offence punishable by the usages of the ser-

vice, the captain looked round, and with a deliberate sternness which made all who observed it quake again, said to the first lieutenant,

"Turn the hands up!"

In less than a quarter of an hour after the crime had been committed, the culprit was in the dreadful predicament of being seized up at the gangway, preparatory to the infliction of his sentence.

"Oh, sir!" said the poor fellow, "this is my first offence, and I am the first person that has been brought before your honour. Do look over me, sir! It really is the first time, sir!"

"I make a rule never to forgive the first offence!" was the formidable reply of our rigid captain, spoken in a voice that reached every ear on board, and sank deep into every breast.

This lesson, stern as it appeared, and painful and decisive as it certainly proved, nevertheless had in it true lenity as well as justice. By these few words, uniformly carried into effect in practice afterwards, every man and boy on board the ship soon came to understand, that his only chance of escape from punishment could be found in adhering strictly to the rules of the service. This penal side of the page might be read and understood by all; but the other, which related to the pleasures and advantages resulting from good conduct, though of course slower in its development, proved not less sure in the long-run. At all events, our future comfort and self-respect were most essentially promoted by this degree of strictness which kept every man steadily to his duty.

Between these two principles of severity in the punishment of offences, and high favour to those who took pains to do right, the ship was speedily brought into proper trim. Every thing now seemed alive, and moved smartly; no time ran to waste; even the indolent and the ill-disposed found their best interest in working well. The decks became cleaner than ever they had been seen before, the people dressed themselves more tidily, the sails looked better furled, the yards better squared, the complaints of inattention or drunkenness grew daily less frequent, and an air of general happiness, as well as new-born energy, spread itself over the whole ship.

An immediate cruise to the southward was now the word, and every hand became active in forwarding the preparations. So magical, indeed, was the effect of this change, that I dare swear we should then have engaged and beaten an enemy, whom it might not have been considered by any means prudent to have brought to action a week before.

It has been well observed, that the simple fact of Lord Nelson's joining the fleet off Trafalgar, double-manned every ship in the line; and those who look about them will find, that the same effect, more or less, is produced in every walk of life, by the mere presence of commanding talents and thorough-bred zeal and energy. No one, therefore, should forget, that although it is the high destiny of only a very few to possess such an astonishing influence over their fellow-men, as that exercised by Nelson afloat or Wellington on shore, yet each in his own particular sphere of authority may often modify, to the most useful purpose, the powers of all ranks and classes of persons placed under him.

A sea-life is fertile in illustrations of this position. In the night-time, for example, at sea, in unsettled weather, it often becomes necessary to reef the top-sails; but when the canvas is wet and heavy, the air cold, and the sailors are fatigued, this operation, which, in the day-time, is a very simple affair, may prove in the dark one of no inconsiderable trouble. It is not, of course, held to be good practice to turn the watch below out of their hammocks to assist in such minor evolutions; so that those who are upon deck must manage it themselves the best way they can. Very sad work they sometimes make of it! The same officer and the very same men, who, in day-light, under favourable circumstances, would have lowered, reefed, and hoisted the topsails up again, in a few minutes, will often labour for an hour at night, without getting the weather-earing out, or a single point tied; and, after all, probably split the sail or spring the yard, in the midst of such a bawling and abuse as well nigh outblasts the rattling of the squall, which is laughing to scorn these misdirected efforts. The half-informed or little-experienced officer probably knows well enough what is required, but not how to execute it. Be the cause, however, what it may, the work remains still to be done.

Suppose that, in the middle of all this noise and confusion, eight bells are struck, and the officer of the new watch comes on deck. If he be a man of abilities, and one who understands his business, the whole scene will be changed in ten seconds. Though the night be as dark as pitch, and the rain or sleet drifting past, still further hides the ropes and sails, his experienced eye, or rather a sort of professional instinct, insensibly acquired from long practice, tells him in a moment what is wrong, and explains the cause of the delay by which the men aloft have been harassed for an hour before. All that is necessary, perhaps, is to ease off a little of the lee topsail-sheet, so that the weather-brace may be rounded in, upon which the yard settles down on the cap, the sail is spilled, the reef-tackle hauled out in a crack, the earings are passed, and the points tied! The whole of this is probably effected in less time than it has taken the inexperienced or stupid officer of the previous watch to pull off his wet boots, as he growls into his cot below, to dream of promotion that he merits not. It must be observed, that no additional men have been employed by the new officer, and that all the circumstances are the same, with the mere superaddition of a grain or two of intelligence. I have often remarked, on occasions such as that described, when the voice alone of an officer, whom the people knew to be competent to the task, has at once given them fresh energy, and enabled them, even without further change, or other orders, to execute with spirit services which all their efforts had been unable to accomplish, when acting under a man in whom they had less confidence.

We thus learn, at every turn, that nothing contributes so directly to combine our efforts, as a consciousness of being well commanded. When people are set to work under an officer on whose skill or experience they have no reliance, even supposing them ever so well disposed to exert themselves, still, as they do not labour 'with a will, and all together,' the object fails, from the exertions employed upon it being scattered and

wasted. But when the head which directs the measure has fully established its ascendancy over the minds of those who are to execute it, each man resigns his own ideas on the subject, and submits cheerfully to what past experience has told him is the better judgment of his superior. The whole crew being now brought to act under one undivided impulse, their power, as a body, is so greatly multiplied, that the result is often quite incomprehensible to those who are not aware of the true explanation, or who cannot be made to understand how essentially men's natures are sometimes changed by the operation of causes apparently wholly unconnected with themselves.

Very shortly after our new captain joined the Leander, we got ready for sea, and started on the 13th of February, 1805, from Bermuda, in company with one of the crack frigates of the station, a ship which had always proved herself a better sailer, and had been more fortunate in taking prizes, than we had been. Upon the strength of this good luck, they generally held our old ship in the greatest contempt. We were, therefore, hardly out of sight of land before she parted company, probably on purpose, and from thinking that where we were there could be no success. Away we dashed, however, alone, and, if I recollect rightly, due south from Bermuda. The winds were light, and we steered on for upwards of a week, every day adding to the genial warmth of the weather, as we hourly raised the sun in the heavens, and brought new stars within our ken, in the bright evenings which form the delight of those temperate regions, bordering on the tropic of Cancer. Even there, occasional clouds, accompanied by a thick haze, blot out the sky, and prevent a cruising ship from seeing beyond half a mile on any side. But, well-directed vigilance masters even such untoward circumstances as these. What does it not master! In spite of the fog and rain, our new commander relaxed nothing of what may be called the discipline of a cruising ship, however thick the weather might be. At the mast-head there was perched a look-out man, with a glass in his hand, ready to peer into any of those curious openings which, like fairies' avenues, cut across the wilderness of mist, for an instant, and straight are closed again. These transient breaks, which are called by the sailors 'fog dogs' (I know not why), are generally considered good symptoms of the weather clearing. It was about mid-day of the 24th of February, that a momentary glimpse of the southern horizon was afforded us on the lee-beam, down one of these singular vistas.

"Keep a bright look-out there in the clear," cried the captain to the man standing on the jacks, or little iron crosstrees on which the heel of the royal-mast rested, with his arm twisted round the spar, and his eye glued to the telescope.

"Ay! ay! sir," replied the fellow; and instantly afterwards roared out, in a voice that was heard even in the lowest depths of the cockpit. "I can see two large vessels standing to the eastward!"

His words came so fast out of his mouth, that, to a stranger's ear, what he said would hardly have been intelligible; but to the quick, professional, experienced organs of the veteran officer they were addressed to, they sounded like the sweetest music, and full of meaning.

"Up with the helm, Mr. Falcon!" said the captain to the officer of the watch; and, catching the bright eye of the delighted boatswain, he called out, "Hands make sail, Mr. Cedar! Set the stunsails low and aloft; shake all the reefs out!"

And then, while three hundred pair of well-directed hands were busy in spreading sail after sail upon the old tub, as she was ironically, but fondly called, and the foam began to hiss and splash in broad streaks on each side of her, the captain again applied to the look-out man aloft, and asked, "Where are the two ships now?"

"I can't see them, sir; the fog has filled up the hole again through which I saw them only for one moment."

"Confound the fog! What did they look like?"

"Very large, sir; they loomed in the haze like armed ships. I think I saw a tier of ports in each of them. They are not far off, sir; we shall be close aboard of them directly."

"Beat to quarters!" was the next order; for by this time, although only a few minutes had elapsed, the topsails were at the mast-head, and the steering-sails, smartly run up to the yard-arms, and well stretched out to the boom ends, so as not to lose a single puff of the breeze, were making the good ship tremble and spank along, like an old hunter conscious of the game. There was not much to do at the guns, as every thing necessary for action was kept at all times in such a state of preparation, that the men merely took their places, cast loose the tackle-falls and breechings, and were ready to have dashed right alongside of an enemy without the delay of one minute. This constant readiness for action of every kind, day and night, coupled with that matchless dexterity in the manipulations which long and unceasing practice alone can give, is in no department of life more decidedly conspicuous than in the profession of which I am speaking. At first sight, indeed, the sources of disorder and variety at sea appear so numerous, arising out of the state of the weather, the very nature of a ship, the particular description of service she is employed upon, the uncertain hours of the day or night when the crew may be called upon to act, the different characters of the officers, the rude training of the sailors, the diversity in climate and country, all so liable to be abruptly changed, that one would think it almost impossible to bring a body of men, so desultory in their habits as seamen, to adapt themselves to these rapid fluctuations. Experience shows, however, that, under a certain well-understood course of training, pretty complicated, I grant, even these inconstant elements may be turned to the best account towards the establishment of a steady system of action, equally applicable to all times and to all circumstances.

In the course of half an hour the fog cleared away entirely, and we discovered the chase to be two frigates, one totally, and the other partially, dismasted. On our coming nearer, the largest of them displayed on her jury mainmast a huge French ensign, then the standard of Buonaparte, though once the well-known tri-coloured banner of the revolution, and the same which is now (1831) again hoisted as the national flag of the French. It consists of three equal portions of blue, white,

and red, in vertical stripes, the blue being next the staff. It is the same as the Dutch flag, only different in position; the Dutch stripes being horizontal, with the blue undermost.

The smaller ship of the two showed the unpleasant signal of capture, the French flag being hoisted over the ensign of England; and we soon recognised in her one of our own squadron, the Cleopatra, a 32-gun frigate. She had been taken about a week before, after a tough action with the Ville de Milan, a 44-gun frigate of the largest class. What resistance the Frenchman might have made to us, had he not previously got pretty well peppered by the gay little Cleopatra, I shall not presume to say; but, hammered as he had been, he did not appear to like our double row of teeth, and at once struck, on our firing a shot across his fore-foot. We had, therefore, only to secure our guns again, and be content with a good fat prize, without the honour and glory of a scuffle, but with the great additional satisfaction of rescuing our countrymen and their ship from the hands of their enemy.

I must say, however, without affectation, that it was impossible, even in the midst of our joyous success, not to feel for the mortification of our enemies. They had captured, in fair fight, a goodly prize, and were spanking away with her to France, when pop we came upon them, and not only robbed them of their prey, but lugged them off to prison, and there shut them up for eight or ten long years, like criminals. Yet, the only crime of these brave men was that of being ill commanded; or, to speak less enigmatically, their misfortune was, to serve a hard-hearted master, whose stern policy it had become, seriously to alter the aspect of modern warfare amongst civilised nations, by throwing every obstacle in the way of an exchange of prisoners. The effect was, to expose many of his most deserving subjects—men of honour and high character—indiscriminately with those of lower pretensions, to some of the severest of the penalties due only to crime; the shabby excuse, totally unworthy of such a man, being, that he subjected a certain number of his enemies to a similar course of suffering, while the inevitable effect was to deepen and embitter all the horrors of war, not only in the case of his foes, but on the heads of those very persons, his countrymen, who were the most deserving of favour at his hands.

This part of Napoleon's system has, naturally enough, appeared, to professional men, and, I believe, to most other people, one of the least excusable of the long list of his questionable acts of policy, even when considered with reference to his own purely selfish views, or to his more enlarged national purposes. At all events, there can be little question that it added to the irritation, as well as affliction, of the families of his captured countrymen, and therefore, probably, diminished the zeal of all those who, in their turn, might expect to be exposed to a like fate. Independently, however, of all these considerations, it certainly does appear not a little cruel to punish, in this way, prisoners of war, soldiers and sailors who have honestly and manfully, in the open face of day, done their duty, exposed their lives, and spilled their blood, in the service of their country. To very many persons on both sides, during the last war, this imprisonment was little short of torture; to many it was death; and to some it was worse than death; for, while it broke down their health, ruined their fortunes, and shipwrecked their principles, it cast them forth at last, after ten or a dozen years of wretched captivity, destitute of character, useless to their country, and burthens to themselves.

Your Cherokee of the backwoods makes far quicker work of it. He ties his prisoner of war to a tree, lights a fire under him, and dances to the sound of his cries. But these are soon over; whereas the soldier or sailor captured by the polished nations of Europe, during the late contest, was seldom so speedily despatched. He was generally left to linger out his captivity in all the bitterness of blasted prospects, affections crushed, and hopes deferred, in nursing schemes of impotent revenge, and in the indulgence of every uncharitable as well as unpatriotic feeling. Upon the whole, it is perhaps hardly possible to conceive a Pandemonium on earth more completely destructive of happiness, or so well calculated to deteriorate the character, as the prisons in which the French and English immured their captured warriors, respectively, for so many long years.

Since the hour when I saw, for the first time, these honourable and gallant Frenchmen locked up like felons, and shown through bars like wild beasts, I have often thought it might, perhaps, all things considered, have been found a wise policy in us, after trying in vain every legitimate method of effecting an exchange of prisoners, to have sent all the men whom we had taken back again to their country. I am quite conscious that this idea may be thought by many persons absurd enough; nevertheless, the result, I am inclined to believe, might, in the long-run, have been favourable to the reputation of this country, and injurious to the man whose schemes of policy so often rendered him apparently indifferent to the sufferings even of his own brave subjects. A solemn engagement might fairly have been exacted from each prisoner thus sent back, not to serve again during the war. Those released would certainly have carried over with them to France a kindly feeling towards this country, instead of bearing with them, as they did at the end of the war, a degree of bitter rancour in no respect unreasonable.

The obvious, and I confess formidable, objection to this project is, that if we had let all our prisoners off, they would have gone straightway back again to the fleet, or to the army, and so have been ready next week, in spite of all their promises, to act against us anew. Still, I really do not believe that it would eventually have mattered much if every individual French prisoner had been set adrift unconditionally: for I suspect it is seldom that mere numbers determine the fate even of a single battle, still less frequently of a whole campaign, and of a nation probably never. I cannot, therefore, bring myself to suppose that the ultimate course of military or naval affairs of France and England would have been at all modified, to our disadvantage, had we released every prisoner made during the war.

This idea will, perhaps, not appear so very Quixotic, if it be recollected that the real sources of military success, and, indeed, of all permanent national strength, lie far higher than those which

supply mere physical force. The experience of history in all ages, if rendered available by a tolerably intrepid generalisation, will enable us to discover, that it is not the vulgar force of numbers that constitutes solid power, but the moral and intellectual authority of virtue, and scientific skill steadily directed towards the accomplishment of right purposes; and that the eventual preponderance in the scale of national influence is always on the side of good faith.

Be all this, however, as it may, I must confess that there can be nothing more unlike misery than the first appearance of a captured ship's company of Frenchmen. What their state becomes afterwards, when the excitement of the moment is past, and the effort of bearing up well against calamity, from being no longer seen, is considered useless, I need not describe; but it certainly is wonderful how these lively people contrive, in the first instance, to remove from their thoughts and looks everything unpleasant. The French midshipmen were actually playing at cards in our berth on the very evening they were taken; and, next day, there was a proposal made by them to get up a set of private theatricals in the cockpit! Meanwhile, the sailors and soldiers, who, to the number of several hundreds, were stowed away in the hold, beguiled their time by singing as merrily as if they had been the captors, we the captives. When I talk of these prisoners being stowed away in the hold, I should mention, that the upper tier of water-casks being broken up or shaken, as it is called, and the staves placed as a flooring on the middle tier, a large, and not very uncomfortable apartment was formed. A set of upright planks were then nailed round the square of the hatchway, both on the orlop and the lower decks; so that all lateral escape was prevented, without any interruption to the access of air and light. In this way a small guard of marines easily kept the whole in due order and security.

There were, I think, only two or three midshipmen at that time belonging to the Leander who spoke French at all. One of these, who understood the language well, had no sinecure of his office of interpreter. Another, who knew it less perfectly, was led into many blunders in consequence. My own acquaintance with French was just enough to show me how very important such knowledge may often prove to an officer. This opportunity, indeed, and many succeeding ones, have confirmed me in the opinion, that one of the most valuable pursuits to which a youngster intended for the sea can give his attention, is the study of modern languages. It happened that, in the larboard mess, I was the only one who knew a single word of what the prisoners were saying, while it was with great difficulty I could make them understand me at all. Imperfect, however, as this knowledge was, it was at all calls; and as I was, of course, very desirous to maintain the important character of an interpreter, I laboured through my task, and learned more French in the few weeks we were together than I have ever been able to acquire by any degree of attention in as many months elsewhere.

On the 7th of March we reached Bermuda, with the re-captured Cleopatra and the Ville de Milan. which ship the sailors christened the 'Wheel 'em along,' a name she never lost, even when admitted into our service, till the Admiralty (in despair, I suppose, of mending Jack's 'cachology') cut off the 'wheel,' and positively ordered her to be called His Majesty's ship Milan, her present appellation.

It is difficult to describe the sensation which such an arrival as ours produced in a small place like Bermuda. Even at Portsmouth or Plymouth, a considerable degree of interest would have attended the arrival of two such ships. They were both, as I have mentioned before, under jurymasts, their sides all ploughed up with shot, and their prize-colours so riddled with holes that they scarcely held together, but fluttered in the breeze like rags hung up to dry. Then came the painful landing of the wounded, the marshalling of the prisoners, and the saucy importance of the victors; subjects fertile in talk for any part of the world. But, in the quiet and beautiful retirement of Bermuda, these warlike incidents, so foreign, one might fancy, to the character of such peaceful scenery, furnished even more than a nine days' wonder, and raised the jolly Leander to a station in public opinion which we, her younger sons, were not slow to improve.

There was, of course, no further quizzing against us in the fleet; and the middies, profiting by their luck, lost no opportunity of cutting as many capers as they possibly could over those of less fortunate ships. The circumstance of our bearing the Admiral's flag, whenever we were in port, gave us already sundry immunities, such as a right to occupy the best berth in the anchorage, the priority at the watering-place for our boats, and the privilege of initiating all evolutions in the squadron. On all these, and, indeed, on every other occasion, we afterwards presumed so prodigiously on the strength of the goodly crop of easy-won laurels reaped during our late cruise, that the scrapes we got into were not few.

Amongst the inhabitants on shore, we were feasted in the very best fashion the island could afford. Ham and eggs, the grand standing dish of the place, were sported at no allowance; while rum punch, Havannah cigars, and a hearty welcome, met us at every door. It is not wonderful, therefore, that we thought ourselves the finest fellows imaginable; or that Bermuda, hitherto somewhat despised, should now appear to us quite a Paradise of good cheer and hospitality.

CHAPTER XV.

THE VALUE OF EARLY SUCCESS IN LIFE.

THE year 1805, which commenced so auspiciously with the capture of the Ville de Milan, was one of the busiest we passed on the coast of America. We had no such grand luck again, indeed, as that of the two frigates; but we took several prizes, and were throughout the year so actively engaged, that we had no time for any thing like discontent. I have always thought, that beginning the campaign so favourably had a material influence on our fortunes afterwards. It certainly inspired us all with a great degree of confidence in our own good fortune, as well as reliance on the skill of the captain who directed us. Every one, accordingly, during this period,

seemed to do his duty with more than usual spirit, from a sort of consciousness that he had only to seek for the things he wished to have, and straightway they would fall within his grasp.

The influence of early success in modifying our future fortunes seems to indicate one of the most striking characteristics of our nature. It almost invariably begets that invaluable quality, cheerfulness, and a disposition to be pleased with the persons amongst whom we are thrown, which experience shows are the surest passports to the favour of the world. It is quite true, as the historian Hume says, in speaking of himself, that "a disposition to see the favourable, rather than the unfavourable, side of things, is a turn of mind, which it is more happy to possess, than to be born to an estate of ten thousand a-year;" but unless we fall in with a certain degree of good fortune soon enough in the journey, it is extremely difficult to maintain, amidst our 'crosses and losses,' the proper share of good humour necessary first to gain, and then to preserve, the slippery favour of those with whom we have to deal. A man whose disposition is prematurely soured, by the want of early success, generally busies himself in finding out rather the faulty views which things will bear, than the favourable ones; and, in order to justify his failure, industriously raises up fresh difficulties, instead of trying manfully to surmount those which really exist. He is never quite pleased with any thing or any person, and thus, almost inevitably, contributes to perpetuate his own want of success. Such a man's society is generally shunned, not from any thing actually vicious in his nature, but merely because he has acquired the disagreeable habit of disparaging every thing he sees. As it seldom occurs to him that he himself is in fault all the while, he goes on abusing the world and all which it inherit, and exactly in proportion as he growls himself out of company, he increases in the vehemence of his censure of people and things which, had his thoughts and feelings been differently pitched at first, might very probably have proved the sources of his fortune.

On the other hand, if a young man happen to make some fortunate hits, as they are called, early enough in his career to be put into good humour with the world through which he has to struggle, the journey of his life may turn out far easier, chiefly because he finds 'troops of friends' always ready to assist him. The great mass of wayfarers in this arduous course, however, generally speaking, will seldom help those who either cannot, or will not help themselves, but who rather choose to sit bawling to Mercury to help them out of the mire, instead of placing their own shoulders to the wheel.

I have been tempted to repeat my opinions more strongly on this subject, so very important to young men who are working their way up in difficult professions, from recollecting how material an influence the following apparently trivial circumstances had upon the whole course of my own fortunes.

I began about the busy period immediately after the recommencement of hostilities, to feel the good effects of a choice, it may be recollected, I had been allowed to make upwards of three years before, just after we sailed from England, when our worthy captain left it to the option of the youngsters whether they would keep watch or not. I had decided upon performing this duty, chiefly, perhaps, from pique at the idea of being held so cheap, or from a wish to get rid of the degrading sort of insignificance which attached to us, as mere ciphers on the ship's books. Whether this feeling influenced me, or a higher set of motives, does not greatly signify; the material point is, that I found out, by this means, the advantages of the actual practice of professional business much earlier than I should otherwise have done, and, as a matter of course, was more ready to avail myself of the opportunities of useful employment which the progress of the war began to develop about this time.

In every captured ship, sent by us to Halifax, or to Bermuda, there was despatched a midshipman as prize-master, with one of the youngsters to assist him, and a proper number of seamen, as a prize crew, in place of the prisoners taken out. It was no small honour to be entrusted with the chief authority on these occasions; and, in a lesser degree, it was always considered creditable, as well as useful, to be sent as second in command, under the prize-master. By useful, I mean in a professional point of view; for although the technical responsibility rested with the senior officer in charge, the actual labour, and much of the anxiety of this interesting kind of duty, were fully shared by the junior. Perhaps there could not be a better school for a young officer; and I considered myself in the highest degree fortunate that I was constantly employed on this service during almost every cruise we made. At first starting I was only second in charge, but eventually became so completely one of the regular prize-masters of the ship, that for several years I never once returned to port in my own ship, being always absent in one or other of her captures. The nature of the occupation which these events engaged us in, was as different from our ordinary duty, as any two things can be conceived.

As long as a midshipman remains on board his own ship, he is merely reckoned as one of a multitude of very small wheels in the great machine, and, consequently, must generally be left almost entirely without that independent responsibility which is so necessary, first to awaken his faculties, and then to sustain them in useful action when roused up. A midshipman, as I have before described, always acts under the immediate orders of superiors on deck, or is liable to be kicked and cuffed about at the pleasure of 'taller bullies' of his own class below; or it may be his fortune to be well scolded or otherwise punished at the caprice of an inconsiderate commander, who sometimes scarcely seems to imagine that a youngster is composed of the same flesh and blood as himself.

"Well, Mr. Whipper Snapper, what makes you look so preciously glum?" said the captain to a poor middy whom he had been abusing like a pickpocket.

"Since you ask me, sir," replied the youth, "I must say that the way you speak to me hurts my feelings."

"Feelings!" roared the captain in a convulsion of laughter—"Feelings!—A midshipman with

feelings!! Well, this is good; the service is come to a pretty pass, when midshipmen are encumbered with feelings! Be off, sir, and see if you can't get rid of a cart-load of them. Come, sir, no reply, or up you march to the mast-head for ten hours, feelings and all!"

But a widely different story is told to the same lad, by the same commander, when a prize is taken; and when an officer with a crew are ordered to take charge of her, the aforesaid "middy with the feelings" is picked out as the prize-master. The captain, probably, at the very moment he was abusing, or rather quizzing, the boy, did justice to those very qualities which the young fellow supposed were held at nought. At all events, he now finds himself treated like a man of sense and knowledge. The captain summons him to the cabin, reads him his orders, instructs him in the nature of the important duty he has to execute, shakes hands with him, and wishing him a good passage, sends him off in the boat, which carries him and his people to the captured vessel. The man-of-war soon makes sail, and the youngster who, the day before, was scoffed at and treated as nobody, now finds himself in the middle of the Atlantic, a thousand miles from his port, charged with a high responsibility, and to all practical intents and purposes the captain of a ship!

I should suppose there is almost as boundless a variety in the chase of vessels at sea, as there can possibly be in that of foxes or deer. I shall shortly, perhaps, have occasion to describe some of these animating adventures, from which it will be observed, that we cruisers are amongst the busiest sportsmen in the field. For the present, we shall skip over the intermediate details, and consider the chase come up with, and her colours struck. The first thing to be done is to take possession. For this purpose, a boat with an officer is sent on board, who receives from the commander of the prize his register and other papers, all of which are sent, along with himself, on board the man-of-war, in order to be examined by the captain. These documents, after being looked at, are sealed up, and given to the prize-master, for the inspection of the Admiralty Court, on the vessel's arrival in harbour.

Every capture, it must be mentioned, requires, now-a-days at least, to be regularly condemned by a Court of Admiralty before she can be sold, or the proceeds distributed to the captors. At some stages of the late war, and under particular circumstances, I believe many enemy's vessels were taken, condemned, and their cargoes shared out, all in the same breath. If there happened to be money on board, it was straightway parcelled out on the capstan-head, and each officer and man got his whack, as they called it, without the tedious intervention of unintelligible legal forms, interminable proctor's bills, and the doubly-cursed agent's per-centage. But those glorious days have all gone by! I cannot, indeed, speak of such scenes from personal observation; but I know, from officers who have participated in the plunder, that they never fail to recall the brilliant days of those delightful fellows the Bucaniers, when dollars, doublons, huge crucifixes of gold, massive silver candlesticks, and other sacrilegious pillage of the cathedral towns on the Spanish main, rewarded their industry and unquestioned courage.

But it is very strange, passing strange, how a few hocus-pocus forms and ceremonies can soften off such things, and reconcile men's consciences to the pocketing of other people's money. All the world are now agreed, that it is a shocking scandal to land in the night on a peaceful shore, and, before morning breaks, sack half a dozen villages, cut the throats of the unresisting inhabitants, and rob every church and chapel within the range of cannon-shot. This is pure bucaniering, and was performed by lawless fellows, who, caring for neither the laws of God, nor for those of man, were perfectly satisfied to go in chase of gold with a rope round their necks, utterly careless of glory, so they could manage, by fair measures or foul, to fill their treasure-chest.

I should be sorry to write an essay against prize-money; but I must say, that the man over whose mind there does not come a qualm, at the moment of making it, even in the most legitimate style of these refined days, is more or less eligible for the interesting service above described. I say nothing against that well-earned prize-money which is won by good honest fisty-cuffs. If two armed national ships meet in deadly fight, well and good; it is their express business; they hunt each other out, and are content to stand or fall by the consequences. The captor, in such cases, may very fairly dispose of his antagonist for whatever he will fetch, and distribute the proceeds with the most perfect ease of conscience.

But the affair, I have always felt, is very different, when we come to the seizure of private property. It is quite true we hold regular commissions from our government, war is formally declared, and the parties interested volunteer to incur the risk of capture, and trust their precious cargoes on those seas which they know are netted over with the tracks of their enemy's cruisers. Still, it is private property; and though it be easy to show how it has grown into a custom, and why it is just and proper to seize and confiscate such vessels; and, even if it were not so, that it has become absolutely necessary, according to the rules of modern warfare, that the property of belligerents thus exposed on the high seas should be liable to capture; yet, when we come to the actual moment, it does sometimes require all these supports, in the way of legal reasoning and political expediency, to subdue the remorse which otherwise we should feel at such official bucaniering.

During the chase, indeed, while our masts are bending over the sides, and we can scarcely walk the decks under the press of canvas, while we are banging off the bow-chaser guns at the flying enemy, at whose gaff end we can see the golden flag of Spain—"yellow, red, yellow," with a flaming crown in the centre!—fluttering before us, and telling a tale of bullion in huge bars, or of cochineal in bales; our whole thoughts and feelings are absorbed in the pursuit, and in the erection of castles in the air, out of the proceeds of the treasure close ahead, and all but grasped. By and by, the well-aimed six-pounder, fired from the forecastle, cuts away the peak-haulyards of the chase, and down comes his mainsail. In the next minute we are alongside of our prey, who lies

gasping at our mercy in the trough of the sea. Mercy we have none to afford him, or, at least, no sympathy, for all is rejoicing, laughing, shaking of hands, and mutual congratulations at this choice good fortune. The prize is hailed :

"Where are you from ?"

"La Vera Cruz."

This answer produces a loud expression of pleasure along the decks, but is instantly hushed to hear the reply to the next question.

"What is your cargo ?"

"Plata, señor. Dollars and gold dust !"

These words are echoed by a hundred voices ; and it is not saying too much, to suppose that the pleasure of that moment far exceeds any that attends the subsequent distribution, or even spending, of the money.

The boat is soon lowered down, and the Spanish captain, with his papers, brought on board ; upon which it becomes known that the ship and cargo are chiefly the property of an old Spanish merchant, who, with his wife and family, are in the vessel, on their return to Cadiz, after twenty long years of honest industry in the colonies. The next boat brings the white-headed old gentleman and the ladies on board, calm and dignified under their calamity, according to the noble spirit of their country, although totally and irretrievably ruined. Then come eight or ten other persons, some gentlemen, some in lower stations, each of whom has, probably, invested his whole fortune in the prize—all now gone ! while they themselves are destined to be carried far from home, and subjected, not only to poverty, but to imprisonment perhaps for a long course of years.

This picture is not over-coloured ; on the contrary, it is rather softened, by the suppression of many disagreeable details which would shock needlessly to relate, but which live, I am sorry to say, too vividly upon my memory ever to be erased. It might savour of affectation to declare, that I have seldom paid away a dollar of prize-money got in this way, without its summoning up the image of some of these wretched groups of captives, whose grief forms such a deep contrast to the joyous expression of the lighted-hearted winners.

We must let these things pass, however. The prize is taken, the prisoners are removed, and a crew of Englishmen sent on board. The happy, but anxious young prize-master has his orders to proceed ; and in the course of an hour, or it may often be much less, he finds himself alone, and, with a fluttering heart, in the middle of the wide ocean, with a rich and important vessel in his charge, and a long voyage to make. If this is the first time his shoulders have been pressed by such a load of responsibility, he will not feel very much at ease. All the difficulties and dangers of the task crowd upon his thoughts, while his own capacity to meet and overcome them appears to shrink, for the moment, into insignificance. Heretofore, the charge of a prize has been the object of his highest ambition ; but he now discovers, that when he gave lectures in the cockpit upon his own great skill, and boasted of his knowledge of the art of conducting a ship safely to port, he must have been viewing the matter in a very different light from that which the reality presents.

He finds, also, that he had left out many items in his calculation of the difficulties. He has a crew to keep in order—a small one, indeed, but often not the more easy to manage on that account—exactly as many captains, who contrive to maintain full-manned ships in excellent kelter, are said to prove but poor disciplinarians at their own fire-sides. He has the ship to navigate ; and although among his fellow-mids, in the school-room, he may have been considered the best theoretical computer of a lunar on board, he will now feel no small awkwardness in taking even the simplest observation, when he reflects that upon its accuracy may depend the safety of all the lives and property intrusted to his charge.

In shaping his course, in like manner, he has many things to take into account : he must recollect what are the prevalent winds of the season ; how the currents generally set ; and what is the amount of the variation of the compass. All these things, and many more, which he has been accustomed to treat lightly, he soon finds pressing heavily upon his attention, as matters of the highest importance. Any one of them, at a time, he fancies he could easily manage ; but when the whole catalogue of difficulties is brought to bear upon one point, and at one moment, he learns practically, for the first time, and in all its alarming force, what it is to be implicitly trusted. As soon as this knowledge is impressed upon his mind, our young officer may be said to become a totally new man. It is true, his bodily stature is not altered ; but his mind has shot up as if by magic, and is so changed, that very often he can hardly recognise it himself. From that hour forward, he becomes possessed of more generous aspirations and higher hopes, till then quite strange to him : he also feels himself invested with new capacities, as well as a fresher and more useful set of feelings ; and a long vista of bright scenes opens before him, which his delighted fancy whispers he may one day enter and enjoy. What gives this prospect its chief value, indeed, in his eyes, is the very different aspect which the future wears from that in which he has been accustomed to view it, during those obscure and unsatisfactory day-dreams with which he has heretofore been wont to torment himself. He now begins to feel confident that his ultimate success depends less upon the assistance of others than upon his own industry, and that, as he has proved himself capable of gaining the first step, he may, by due exertion, hope to win all the rest. Having thus a definite set of objects to pursue, and a distinct method of pursuing them chalked out for him, his abilities will no longer be wasted on shadows, but must come to grapple resolutely with the substance itself.

It is not pretended, of course, that all this actually passes through the mind of every person placed, early in life, in situations of high trust ; but I feel pretty certain, that if a young man really have any talents within him, which are backed by a hearty inclination towards his profession, and that his character is held together by a genuine love of independence, he is in the fairest way to success. If all these feelings be accompanied by a proper acquaintance with his duty, the most certain way, not only of calling out his powers, but of giving stability to his energies, and

practical efficacy to all his virtuous resolutions, is to load him, as soon as possible, and as heavily as possible, with responsible duties which are difficult in their execution, and creditable when well performed. If also he be right principled, that is to say, if, while he acts from a disinterested sense of duty, he have likewise a correct apprehension of how much he ought and can perform single-handed, and how far he ought to distrust himself, such a man will either succeed in life, or secure the next best thing, the consciousness of having merited success.

We have been supposing here that the subject of our professional experiment is a young man of abilities, knowledge, and zeal, and one whose character stands on good foundations in other respects. But the expanding and improving effect of early responsibility is perhaps nearly as conspicuous upon persons less happily moulded. At least, I have seen many an indolent, and sometimes even an ill-disposed person, rescued from a life of absolute uselessness or positive folly by the reviving operation of this invigorating stimulus. Weak minds and weak bodies are apt to give way under the pressure of too heavy obligations; but of such persons it may probably be said, that they would not have succeeded by any other course of training, or in any other profession; they must, therefore, be classed amongst the crowded ranks of idlers who will not move hand or foot for themselves, but rather choose their friends to work for them, and fancy themselves abominably ill-used every time they are called upon to contribute any of their own sleeping-time, even to the promotion of their own interests; while they kick up a great row when the sacrifice is proposed on the score of public duty.

CHAPTER XVI.

HEAVING THE LOG.

For my part I did not sleep one minute at a time during the first night I was prize-master. Every sea that struck the bows, and shook the Spanish brig I had charge of, made me jump up, fancying some accident. Or if I dropped into a half-slumber, straightway methought the furious Dons with their daggers were at my throat, and the beautiful prize wrenched from me! The next dream was, that we had sprung a leak; and the pumps being choked, all the cargo was melted away, and we had to return in a crazy boat, to tell a lame tale of services unperformed. On the second night, having overwrought myself with this sort of anxiety, I lay half-awake, in a sort of fever, and fancied everything was going wrong. I had left the deck at midnight, with the wind dead against us, and it seemed as if our passage would never be made. I soon, however, fell so fast asleep, as to hear none of the stir which took place on deck early in the middle watch. Towards four o'clock I awoke, when all again was still. I had not taken off my clothes; and even the spy-glass, with which I had been looking at the stars, to detect in what direction the upper clouds were crossing the sky, was still in my hand. Of course, I imagined the wind, as before, was blowing against us; and starting up, I went once more on deck, to growl at the hard-hearted breeze.

The moon, which shone high in the heavens when I quitted the deck, was now dropping into the western horizon, in the direction of the gulf of Mexico, between which and the prize there stretched a slender line, or chain, of bright silvery reflections, such as we rarely observe, except when the sea is very smooth. The surface, more like that of an inland lake than of the wide ocean, was scarcely disturbed by the smallest possible ripple. We were then just leaving the trade-winds; and although a light air had sprung up from the southward, and promised to freshen, it as yet scarcely breathed along the face of the waters, though distinctly felt aloft. Had there been any swell, even the highest sails must have flapped against the masts. But the cotton canvas, which was as white as snow, being rendered quite damp by the heavy dew of the regions bordering on the tropics, the royals and smaller studding-sails bulged themselves out under the influence of the light wind, and stood nearly as motionless as if the prize had been metamorphosed into one of those beautiful toys of glass: indeed, the whole scene, ocean, sky, and ship, seemed for the moment a mere illusion.

I was surprised, on looking over the gangway, to see we were stealing along at the rate of between four and five knots an hour; for the sea was so smooth, that not the smallest tremor had indicated how fast we were going through the water. The ear, indeed, when attentively pitched, could catch the faint sound of those tiny little waves, which the poets call billows, breaking on the sharp bows of the pretty prize, as her cut-water glided between them, or, rather, across them, for we were then going 'right before it.' The night, which had succeeded to a sultry day, was still so hot, that I found the officer of the watch, my assistant-mid, pacing the deck without his hat, and his linen jacket thrown open, to catch the cool air, which he was whistling zealously to augment. He reported, that the breeze, which had been directly against us when I left the deck, had soon died away, and in its place the light air now blowing from the south had sprung up, but so gradually, that he thought there was every appearance of its lasting.

No one, perhaps, can conceive the delight of such a scene as this, but persons who have been in some way dependent upon the winds and waves for their success, and have experienced the happiness of a change from a foul wind to a fair one. Every stitch of sail that could be set was of course now crowded on the vessel, and every yard trimmed with the utmost care, after which I again lay down, in spite of the picturesque beauty of the night; and in less than two minutes was fast asleep, dreaming of sailing past old Cape Sambro, and of anchoring my charge, in full security, at Halifax. Anon I pictured to my fancy the honour and glory of marching up to the Admiral's house, to report the arrival of a prize, always a welcome communication. Nor am I clear which was really the happier period of the two, the actual arrival in port, or these visions of importance attached to the anticipated success of this first independent voyage. But of one thing I am quite certain, that all this stirring up of the

thoughts, and highly strained, yet not over-strained, exercise of the faculties, this constant play of hopes and fears, anxieties during a foul wind, and ecstacies when it is fair, must be in the highest degree profitable to a young officer. My experience, at least, enables me to say, that such duties give a very just foretaste of the future cares, as well as future enjoyments, of the profession. I speak of those subsequent periods when, instead of a mere passing service, such as the humble charge of a petty prize, he is called upon to act under responsibilities which are not only infinitely more weighty, but more permanent in their pressure, and which are varied in their kind and in their degree, much beyond the reach of experience to anticipate, or of previous instruction to render simple.

It may be useful, indeed, to remember, that while but a small portion of the higher employments of any profession, or perhaps of any branch of knowledge, can be taught by fixed rules, a great deal may always be done in the way of instruction by affording the pupil opportunities of schooling his judgment and his other faculties early in life, by this sort of practice in the way of real business. It will probably not very much signify if the first trials bear but little resemblance to the future and more important work which the boy may be called upon to execute when he shall grow up to manhood; for the grand point to aim at, is the full and varied exercise of his talents under situations of undivided responsibility, and in which, above all, there shall be a necessity for prompt action; and where, although a false step may not be utterly ruinous, it is sure to be considered more or less derogatory to his character.

Nothing of any moment occurred during this voyage; for the wind continued fair, and we reached Halifax in safety. But upon another similar occasion, I was within an ace of being shipwrecked, entirely through my own carelessness. The vessel then under my care was an American sloop, detained off New York during one of our blockades, already described. I had no regular assistant upon that occasion, but merely a quarter-master and three or four hands to navigate my little charge. During the first day, the Leander took us in tow, and pulled us along towards Halifax at treble the rate the old bit of a sloop had ever gone in her best days; to say nothing of what she could now accomplish, when almost worn out, half water-logged, and the parent of a copious family of weeds, streaming from her bends, like the beard and tail of a river god in those old pictures thrust in as filling up pieces in the corners of a map.

A strange sail having been reported in sight from the mast-head of the Leander, I was ordered to cast off the tow-rope. In one moment, from being dragged through the water at the rate of eight or nine miles an hour, the poor sloop's speed was reduced to a couple of knots, and the man-of-war shot out of our sight in a very short time. I now found myself jogging slowly along towards my port, all alone, with the comfortable prospect of making the passage in ten days or a fortnight, instead of being drawn merrily into port in about forty-eight hours. I know not that I have ever felt more desolate than upon this occasion, when suddenly deprived of the powerful assistance which it cost the great ship hardly anything to lend, but which was nearly all in all to us. Whilst we were in tow, I remember observing, that although in the sloop we had not a breath of wind in our sails, the highest of which did not reach thirty feet above the water, the lofty sails of the flag-ship, raised four or five times higher, were filled with a fine fresh breeze, which carried her through the water, as well as the little vessel in her train, at the rate of several knots an hour.

It may interest some persons to explain, that, in nautical language, the words Mile and Knot are used synonymously. This measure of length, however, is not the statute mile of England, but is identical with what is called sometimes the 'geographical,' and sometimes the 'nautical mile.' It is considerably longer than that fixed by statute, and used on shore, in this country, and in all parts of North America. In one degree of latitude there are sixty geographical, or nautical miles, or knots; while there are sixty-nine statute miles and not quite a thirteenth part (strictly one hundred and forty yards) contained in the same distance. Thus, an easy rule suggests itself for converting one measure into the other, which, though not rigorously accurate, is sufficiently near for all common purposes. If we have a distance expressed in knots, or geographical miles, which we wish to speak of in terms of a statute mile, the rough rule is to add one-sixth to the number. Suppose, for instance, we have 6 knots, which we wish to convert into statute miles, we add one-sixth part, which gives us 7. And consequently, by inverting this process, the rule for converting the number of statute miles into an expression signifying knots (or geographical miles), is to take away one-seventh part from that number. Thus, 7 statute miles, diminished by one-seventh, become 6 knots.

The term knot for mile, in sea language, is derived from the method used on board ship to ascertain the rate at which a vessel is passing through the water. A line, about seventy or eighty fathoms in length, rather thicker than whip-cord, is kept on a reel about a foot and a half in width, and five or six inches in diameter. To the end of this line is fixed a flat piece of wood, somewhat larger than a man's hand, in the form of a quadrant or one quarter of a circle. To this piece of wood, which is called the log-ship, a slip of lead is attached on the curved side, of sufficient weight to make it sink perpendicularly in the water till the centre, or angular point, is just visible above the surface. The line at the end is divided into two branches or legs, one of which is permanently fixed to a corner of this log-ship, while the other is kept in its place in the opposite corner by a peg, thrust into a hole when the log is to be used. This peg is so contrived that, by jerking the line, it can be withdrawn when the operation is over.

These arrangements will easily be understood, by recollecting the disposition of the strings by which a boy's kite is attached to the cord. The log-ship, in fact, is merely a miniature water-kite. As long as all the legs or branches at the end of the line are fixed to it, the plane is kept flat against the water; but if one of the strings gives way, or if the peg holding it be withdrawn, the same thing happens to the log-ship that would happen to a

kite if one of its two legs or terminating strings were cut close to the paper. The flat face of the board instantly ceases to oppose itself to the fluid, and, of course, when one of its angles only is presented, it is easily pulled back again. As long, however, as the peg remains in its place, the plane of the board offers so much resistance to the water, that as the vessel from which it is hove advances, the log-ship remains upright nearly in the same spot, like a floating anchor, and thus draws the line off the reel, which is held up for the purpose.

It will now be easily understood, that if the line be divided into equal portions of a known length, and account be taken of the number of these portions which pass through the hand in a given time, an inference may be deduced as to the rate at which the ship is sailing, in any other space of time, say in one hour. In practice, the method is, to employ what is called a half-minute sand-glass, and to divide the log-line into portions bearing the same relation to a nautical mile that half a minute does to an hour. At the end of the first portion of the line, one knot is placed ; at the second, two knots, and so on. If this sand-glass were made to run exactly half a minute (30 seconds), then, since the number of feet in a nautical mile is 6079, each knot on the line ought to consist of 50 feet and a little more than 7 inches.

It is found more convenient, however, to use a sand-glass which runs only 28 seconds, and to divide the log-line into portions of 47 feet 3 inches, which still very nearly preserves the proportion between the two things compared.

In arithmetical language this ratio may be expressed by saying :—As 3600 (the number of seconds in one hour) are to 28 (the number of seconds which the sand-glass runs), so are 6079 feet (the length of a geographical mile) to 47 feet 3 inches nearly (the length of one knot or portion of the log-line).

In ships of war, the custom is to adhere strictly to these proportions ; but I have been on board some vessels where the practice was to use a sand-glass which ran 30 seconds, while the length of the knots on the line was made exactly 8 fathoms, or 48 feet, instead of its being somewhat more than 50½, the true proportion, if a half-minute glass be used. This derangement of the correct proportion is sometimes adopted from ignorance, and sometimes from a wish that the distance 'run by log' may always place the ship somewhat ahead of her true position, and thus put the navigator on his guard. But those who defend this fallacious mode of proceeding, forget that, as the true state of the case is never quite lost sight of, the subterfuge is more apt to do harm, by an undue allowance either in excess or defect, than could ever arise from an adherence to strict truth. We see something like this on shore, when the cunning master of a house sets his clock forward a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes, to secure having his dinner in good time—forgetting that every mortal in his establishment, especially that important personage the cook, being as well aware of the trick as he is himself, is sure to make his own allowance, to the hopeless destruction of all punctuality.

On board a man-of-war, it is the duty of the mate of the watch, or principal midshipman, to ascertain the rate at which the ship is going through the water, by heaving the log at the end of every hour. This simple operation, however, like everything else with us, is performed with a due observance of established forms, many of which, I suppose, must seem useless to uninitiated eyes.

As the log is hove regularly at least four times in every watch, the moment the bell strikes, the mate of the watch mounts the poop, calling out while he is walking aft,

"Hold the reel !"

The machine on which the line is wound is accordingly seized by one of the lads, stationed there for that purpose by the captain of the mizen-top. The quarter-master holds the sand-glass ; and about fifteen or twenty feet of the line being pulled off the reel by the mate of the watch, and held, along with the log-ship, in his hand, he makes this second exclamation, with a strong interrogative tone,

"Is the glass clear ?"

The answer, "All clear, sir !" is hardly uttered by the old, weather-beaten quarter-master, before the log is dashed from the mate of the watch's hand, right into the sea, on the lee quarter, and well out from the ship, so as not to fall into the wake, or come within the influence of the 'dead water,' as the eddy is called which is drawn along with the ship. If the rate of sailing be considerable, the log-ship hardly lights on the surface before the line flies rattling through the mate's hand, spinning off the reel in fine style. The marks or knots on the line do not commence, however, till thirty or forty feet of what is called 'stray line' have been drawn out, at which point a piece of red buntin is inserted between the strands of the line. This mark, by striking against the hand of the person heaving the log, and through whose fingers, formed into the shape of a ring, the line passes, gives indication, even in the darkest night, of the moment when the period begins, during the lapse of which an account is to be taken of the quantity of line drawn out. As soon as the mate feels this mark pass through his hand, he cries out, "Turn !" Upon which the quarter-master reverses the half-minute glass, and, holding it close to his face, brings it against the brightest part of the sky he can find, in order that he may distinguish the exact moment when the last sands have run through. At that instant he calls out "Stop !" Upon which the mate of the watch closes his hand upon the line, to arrest its further escape ; and the lad, who all the while has held the reel over his head, brings it smartly down to his knees, to prevent any more line from being drawn out. Another man springs forward at the same moment, and, catching hold of the log-line, begins hauling it on board. Meanwhile, the young officer examines the line as it comes in again, and, as soon as one of the sets of knots or marks reaches him, he counts their number, if it be dark, with his fingers. If the ship be going fast, the moment the line is arrested, or within a second or two afterwards, the strain upon it becomes so great, that the peg holding one of the two branches of the line is drawn out of the log-ship, upon which the board instantly turns round, and, by lying flat on the surface of the sea, is easily drawn along. If the vessel be going slowly

through the water, it is necessary to jerk the line smartly, in order to disengage the peg.

The mate next proceeds to the officer of the watch to make his report. It is his duty to state exactly the rate at which the ship is then going; but it remains with the officer to consider and to decide what distance she may actually have passed over during the hour just ended. If there have been no difference in the direction or in the strength of the wind, nor any change in the ship's course, of a nature calculated to augment or diminish the rate of sailing, nor any addition or diminution of the sail set, the officer simply answers to the announcement of what she is then going, in these words,

"Give it her!"

This is quite enough for the mate of the watch, who straightway dives down to the half deck, where he finds the log-board, which consists of two flat pieces of wood, three feet long by fifteen inches broad, painted black, and made to close upon one another, like a huge folio book. Upon this he notes down with chalk, in one of the ruled columns drawn upon it, the course the ship has been steered during the last hour, the distance she has run in knots and parts of a knot, and the direction of the wind. In another compartment he mentions what sails have been set or taken in, and any other matters which the officer of the watch may deem worthy of record. All this is copied, verbatim, next morning, into the Ship's Log-Book; and the officer of each watch places his initials at the close of the different periods during which he had charge of the deck. Three copies are afterwards made; one of which is sent to the Admiralty, another to the Navy Board, and the third to the Admiral of the station. The original log-book is eventually deposited at the Admiralty, for the purpose of future reference.

If, during the interval between the periods of heaving the log, the wind have changed in direction or in force, or if the 'ship's head has been altered,' (the technical expression for making a change in the course steered,) then the officer makes an allowance accordingly. Suppose the report is, that the ship is now going seven knots; but, in the interval since the log was last hove, the wind has freshened so considerably as to accelerate her rate of going by a couple of miles; the officer of the watch, recollecting that at the commencement of the hour she was going only five, says, "Give her six knots;" or, if the change of wind has been recent, he says, "Give her five and a half;" and so on, according to a variety of circumstances, too numerous to be mentioned.

Before quitting this subject, it may be stated, that, when the ship is going very fast, a glass which runs for only fourteen seconds, instead of twenty-eight, is used; and, in this case, the number of knots drawn out must, of course, be doubled, in order to give the true rate of sailing. Small marks are also stuck in half-way between the different places at which the principal marks are inserted. Each knot, therefore, is actually divided by distinctive marks into two parts, each of which is again supposed to be divided into four; so that the whole of every knot, or mile, on the log-line, is nominally divided into eight portions, which, from their being very nearly six feet each in length, are called fathoms. I mention this to explain what sometimes puzzles 'shore-going' people in reading accounts of naval matters, in which it is stated that a ship is sailing at the rate of a certain number of knots and so many fathoms. The meaning of this expression is, that over and above the number of knots, or nautical miles, she is going, so many eighth-parts of a mile (represented on the log-line by fathoms) are added, to give the true rate per hour.

It cannot be denied, that this method of coming at so very important an element in navigation as the distance over which the ship has run, is, to appearance, extremely rude. But the real wonder is, with what singular accuracy it generally gives the result, provided the interval be not too long, and no currents or tides have interfered to carry the ship in some new direction. The log, which, of course, takes account only of the relative motion between the ship and the water, is the foundation of what is called Dead Reckoning—I know not well why, unless it be that, to a certain extent, its operations must be made in the dark, and, at best, in great uncertainty. The contrast which exists between the unsatisfactory nature of this method of determining a ship's place, and the confidence which arises from following the precise rules of nautical astronomy, has a tendency to bring the good old Dead Reckoning into such contempt, that I think we are apt sometimes to hold it too cheap at moments when, if we placed no more than the proper reliance upon its results, we might find them very useful.

I shall certainly take some other opportunity of explaining the principles of the more exact, and far more curious, method of navigating a ship by the aid of nautical astronomy. At present, it is but fair to return to the poor Yankee sloop, my weighty charge, which I left some couple of pages back, wending her very slow way towards Halifax.

It is in navigation as it is in life; with a fair wind, even the dullest sailer can make out a passage; for even if we suppose the vessel to be such a wretched tub, as to go along, at her best speed, only four or five knots an hour, which was a cut rather beyond my good sloop, it is clearly possible that in the course of the twenty-four hours she may run above a hundred miles. In a week, therefore, she will have made perhaps a thousand, if the fair wind holds; and this, be it observed, would carry her in less than a month across the Atlantic.

On this occasion we had the benefit of a slight drain of current in our favour, from being still within the north-western limit of the mighty Gulf Stream, that prodigious water-course, the largest in the world, which, after sweeping out of the Indian ocean, doubling the Cape, and traversing the whole region of the south-east trade-wind, enters the gorge between Africa and the Brazils, crosses the Equator, passes the Carribbee Islands, and scours the Gulf of Mexico; then gushes off, through a huge sluice, by the Straits of Florida, and, gradually expending its gigantic strength as it washes the shores of the United States, finally deposits its load, the washings of a hundred seas, and of ten thousand rivers, in the shoals of Nantucket and the well-known Banks of Newfoundland.

We jogged on slowly and surely, and, as the weather was fine, not unpleasantly; for it was midsummer, which, in those countries, is a delight-

ful season. In process of time we made the land, somewhere to the southward and westward of Halifax. I had obtained a good observation for latitude, and knew pretty well where we were, so that we could shape a tolerable course to make Sambro light-house. The wind was light from the south; and about dusk, as I felt quite exhausted by the fatigues of a hot day, the greater part of which had been passed at the mast-head looking at the land, I lay down, after giving the quarter-master, who was my only assistant, precise directions how to steer. I soon fell asleep, so did my faithless officer, and so likewise, I suspect, did the man at the helm. At all events, we contrived amongst us, by our joint carelessness, to let the vessel drift close to the land. At midnight I was roused up by the shouts of the quarter-master, screaming out my name, and exclaiming that we were nearly on shore. I sprung upon deck in a pretty fright; and good reason there was! Although the night had become pitch dark, the dash of the waves on the rocks close to us made our danger but too distinctly visible; and I remember observing, with a painful interest, even at that horrible moment, that the bright flash of the foam actually cast a light on our sails. I found the vessel steering directly upon the reefs, with the wind right aft, and the main-sheet eased off till the boom touched, or almost touched, the rigging. Of course, I put the helm hard over in a moment; but as the sloop rounded to the wind, which was still light, another fearful belt of breakers rose above the water just before us, which it was obvious we could not weather. To tack, therefore, appeared our only chance; but, owing either to the vessel having lost her way in the process of rounding to the wind, or to the main-sheet not being gathered aft in time, or to some other cause, we missed stays, and for several minutes the fair Margaret (such was the name of my prize) kept rising and falling with the swell, nearly head to wind, and, consequently, moving gradually, stern foremost, towards the ledges of rock, on the sharp peaks of which the sea broke higher than our mast-head, with a deafening sound that will live in my memory's ear to the hour of my death.

"What is to be done now?" I said, muttering to myself.

"What is to be done?" exclaimed the American captain, who was a far older and a far better sailor than his prize-master, and who, besides, knew exactly what his vessel (the pride of his heart) could perform. "Do, sir? why, wear her, if you can, and I think you can. She is now paying off; let her wind round on her heel; she has no way, and will veer in little more than her own length."

This was no season to dispute on points of etiquette; so Jonathan, suiting the action to the word, jammed the tiller hard over, and, having made it fast to the rail, sprang forward, and let go the peak haulyards. Down came the gaff, and off went the sloop, as if she knew the voice of her legitimate sovereign. At the time we again began to gather way, but before we had brought the wind right aft, our bowsprit almost mixed in the froth which fell back in vast sheets from the face of the terrific cliffs. For fully half a minute we lay with our head directly towards the shore; and I must own that, during the short interval (which seemed an age), I felt rather queerish. In a few seconds more the good sloop's head came gradually round, so that the rocks were presently seen on the bow, then on the beam, and at last fairly on the lee quarter. I have omitted to mention, that, as we hoisted the peak of the mainsail smartly up again the very moment the wind caught it on the other side, we were enabled in a little time to draw off from the imminent danger in which we had been placed by the combined neglect and ignorance of the young prize-master.

CHAPTER XVII.

EFFECTS OF THE GULF STREAM.

ABOUT a year afterwards, when mate of his Majesty's ship Leopard, I was placed in charge of a much more respectable vessel, also an American, the identical ship which carried Jerome Buonaparte and his family to Europe, and selected for that purpose from being considered the fastest sailer out of Baltimore. I certainly never saw a more perfect model of a merchant vessel, or one more commodiously fitted up. I was, of course, prodigiously proud of my new and beautiful command; but had soon more important matters to attend to, in the navigation of the ship, some of the difficulties of which may be easily explained.

At the time we parted company from the Leopard, we were within a few days' sail of the coast of America, and may then have been a hundred leagues or so to the north-westward of Bermuda; consequently still within the influence of the Gulf Stream, already alluded to as sweeping, in a north-eastern direction, along the shores of the United States. I was ordered to take my pretty charge to Bermuda, and proceeded to the southward accordingly. Foul winds, however, detained us for several days in the Gulf Stream, for the set of which current I made such an ample allowance, that on reaching the latitude of Bermuda ($32\frac{1}{2}$ N.) it seemed to me almost certain that we must be some thirty or forty miles to the westward of the island, that is, between it and the coast of America.

From the land of Bermuda being low, it is not easily got sight of; and as the whole cluster of islands is of small extent, they are often missed by navigators steering, as they conceive, directly for them. To those, indeed, who are provided with a time-keeper by Molyneux, or any other first-rate maker, there is no danger in following this direct method; for these instruments are now-a-days so admirably constructed, that any error in longitude which would carry a navigator past Bermuda without seeing it is very unlikely to occur. Ships, however, which have not the advantage of a chronometer, and consequently may not be sure of their longitude, generally find it prudent to run into the latitude of the island, and then steer along that parallel till they come in sight of their object. Most people are probably aware that the latitude is an element in navigation almost at all times easily determined, with sufficient accuracy for the purpose now alluded to. The longitude, as every mortal must have heard, is, or rather was, the grand stumbling-block in a sailor's way; and it will readily be understood, of what essential importance it must be to a ship, when running along a parallel of latitude, in

search of a mere speck on the ocean, like Bermuda, that there should be no mistake as to which side of the island she really is upon. For if, in point of fact, the ship shall happen to be on the eastern side of the island, but, owing to some error in the reckoning, her captain believes that she is on the western side, he will naturally steer east, instead of west, as he ought of course to do; and thus will go on increasing his distance from the island, instead of shortening it.

This curious case was precisely mine. The Gulf Stream, as it eventually appeared, had carried my ship eighty or ninety miles farther to the eastward than I had reckoned upon, though an ample daily allowance in that direction was given her. The superficial velocity of this mighty current, it seems, is occasionally accelerated or retarded by the prevalence of hard gales. At all events, whatever might be the cause of this unusual increase in the rate of the stream, it carried me so far beyond my mark, that when I reached the parallel of 32½ N., and supposed myself in longitude 65½ W., that is, about forty miles on the western or American side of Bermuda, I was really in longitude 64°, or thirty miles east of Bermuda! As the wind was blowing from the east, of course I struggled hard to beat up against it, from supposing that my port lay to windward. It was fortunate this breeze was not blowing from the west, as I shall proceed to show.

For a long time antecedent to the period in question I had been familiar in theory with the method of ascertaining a ship's longitude at sea, by lunar; and the master of the Leander had frequently been kind enough to let me take his sextant in my hand, to measure, by actual observation, the angular distance between the moon and the sun, or between the moon and the fixed stars; this being the fundamental operation in this most important of all our nautical problems. Still, I supposed that a great deal more practice was necessary to give any degree of proficiency. But as I could never hope to acquire the requisite skill by the occasional use of a borrowed instrument, and could not afford to buy one for myself, I had given some hints to this effect, when writing home, in a quarter where I trusted they would be attended to. The application succeeded so well, that, in the course of a few months, I was put in possession of one of the best sextants on board, from the hands of that prince of instrument-makers, Troughton. The possession of such a treasure naturally gave a fresh fillip to my exertions; and I well nigh put my eyes out in taking lunar distances all day, and often all night long. In the midst of this active course of practice, I was ordered to carry the above-mentioned American ship to Bermuda; nor is it all improbable, that the sextant may have contributed, in some degree, to gain for its master this enviable distinction.

On the day I reached the latitude of Bermuda (32½ N.), as I said before, I fancied the ship must be on the western side of the island; the sun, however, happened not to be in distance, as it is called, so that no lunars could then be observed. Having nothing, however, to trust to but the dead reckoning, I, of course, continued beating all the morning to the eastward, under the full persuasion that Bermuda lay due east in the wind's eye, instead of being, as it really was, due west, on the lee-beam.

As the night approached, the sky became beautifully clear, and shortly after sunset I got my sextant to work. Before the twilight was ended, and the horizon too faint to admit of the altitudes being taken with accuracy, I had observed four or five sets of lunars. No time was lost in working out the results; when, lo and behold, the longitude, instead of being 65½ W., as I made it by dead reckoning, appeared to be little more than 64 W. or some ninety miles farther to the eastward; thus showing that, notwithstanding we were, as we rightly supposed, thirty miles from the land, it was on the opposite side of the island from that on which we had imagined ourselves to be!

What was now to be done? For, although on board the-flag ship, where the accuracy or inaccuracy of a midshipman's lunars mattered not a straw, I had indulged in the usual presumption of fancying myself rather an expert observer, I was now filled with doubt and anxiety. All the ordinary allowances for the set of the Gulf Stream had already been made, and it was hardly to be conceived that in a week or ten days there should have occurred an error of a degree and a half. It appeared far more likely that some gross mistake had been committed in the figures of the computation, or in my mode of observing the lunars, than that such a huge augmentation to the strength of the current should have taken place at this particular moment.

The American captain, who, like most commanders of ships of that class sailing from the United States, was an admirable navigator, and a very shrewd, obliging, and gentlemanlike person, happened to be so ill that he could not possibly come on deck to make observations to corroborate mine. But though confined to bed, he was able to go over the computations; the result of which, in his hands, agreed so nearly with what I made it, that he at least had no doubts of their accuracy, and recommended me at once to put the helm up, and steer to the westward. I had not confidence enough, however, in my own handy-work for a decision so material to the success of the voyage. In short, I could not force my unpractised imagination to conceive that an island, which I had so much reason to suppose lay due east of me, could possibly be hit upon by steering due west.

This perplexing kind of struggle between the reason and the imagination is of frequent occurrence in every stage of our singular profession. Sometimes it augments our embarrassments; but more frequently, by lending a charm even to the most ordinary duties, enables us to go on with cheerfulness in the execution of tasks otherwise extremely exhausting to our strength and patience. For example, almost the whole of our night-work, when blockading or chasing an enemy, is made up of this sort of combined observation and guess-work; an exercise highly useful in the formation of those habits of resource upon which professional success at sea materially depends.

So, to work I went again, with fresh observations for the longitude. All the adjustments of the sextant were carefully examined, and a new gang of lunars was taken, some with the same,

and some with other stars, but all of them with a degree of attention which, if measured by the depth of interest *felt* in the result, I am not sure I have ever bestowed upon any similar course of observations since. Half of the distances I gave over to my friend the captain, to compute, while I set about calculating the rest. After a time we exchanged computations, without communicating each other's results till all were finished, and then we laid them side by side. The agreement amongst the whole observations was so near to one another, and corresponded also so closely with those taken earlier in the evening, that I could no longer have a doubt as to what should be done. About midnight, then, with a throbbing heart, and a mind filled with the most painful apprehensions, I bore up, made all sail, and, as we had a fresh breeze, spanked along merrily to the west. It was necessary, of course, in running in such a perilous neighbourhood, to keep a very bright look-out; for although Bermuda, on its eastern side, is pretty clear of coral reefs, and we had made ourselves quite certain of our latitude by meridional altitudes of stars, it was not the sort of place to approach incautiously. When the moon went down, therefore, we shortened sail, but continued still slipping along at the rate of four or five knots, till morning.

As soon as the eastern sky first began to give some faint promises of a dawn, and my anxiety had mounted to a pitch scarcely bearable, I kept peering with the night-glass into the gloom which still hung over the horizon in the supposed direction of Bermuda, as if my eagerness to see what was hid beyond could have brushed away the lingering night any quicker. When, at last, the day broke, and the well-known white cliffs of St. David's Head, topped with dark green cedars and lighter-tinted orange-trees, stood pleasantly up ahead of us, at the distance of a league and a half, I could have shouted for joy.

We steered straight for the harbour's mouth, and, having hoisted the joyous signal for a pilot (a union jack at the fore), we soon brought off our worthy black friend, old Jamie Darrel; and before breakfast my valuable charge was snugly moored off St. George's Town, perhaps the prettiest spot, as far as island scenery goes, in any part of the globe beyond the enchanting regions lying within the Tropics.

I was not a little amused by finding we had reached the island before our own ship; and a few days afterwards, I had the satisfaction of rowing on board to report myself, before she anchored. The compliments paid to our success were due, it must be owned, to the sextant so opportunely sent to me; for, unless the dead reckoning had been checked by lunar observations, we might have been kept at sea a month, and, as the ship was short of provisions, serious consequences must have ensued.

In the course of my subsequent professional life, I have seen so much benefit arise from young officers being put very early in possession of such instruments, that I venture to recommend to all parents who can by any means afford it, to consider the money bestowed on such things, not as spent, but rather as put out to productive interest for the use of their sons. It is very true, that all the sextants Troughton or Dollond could construct, aided by all the books of navigation in the world, ever so well crammed into the heads of some persons, would not make even tolerable navigators of them. Papas and mamas, therefore, (if any such there be,) who are conscious of having what are called, in midshipmen's dialect, 'pudding-headed hopefuls,' may either save their money altogether, or seek to direct it to some other point more suitable to the taste and abilities of their unpromising progeny.

The grand purpose to aim at, as I have already more than once observed, is to give young men an opportunity of working in earnest, and for themselves, under the joint stimulus of weighty responsibility and the possession of fitting means for executing such trusts with credit. No one, indeed, but their immediate superior officer can afford them opportunities of showing what their abilities and acquirements really are. Still, a young officer's friends may often aid him most essentially by furnishing him with those means of improvement, which, as in the case of my sextant, have a tendency to strengthen his chance of coming into useful notice.

There is an old saying in the mercantile world, that you never know any man till you come to do business with him. The same thing is true in nautical affairs, and probably in everything else. You can never tell of what stuff any officer is made, till you see him placed in a situation where he is forced to act for himself, from his own knowledge and talents alone, and where the circumstances are such, that while success may earn for him much credit, failure will inevitably be accompanied either by ridicule or disgrace.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CHANGE OF SHIP.

If a midshipman's satisfaction be great in having charge of a prize, there is also an intensity of bitterness in the return to his own ship again; a feeling which will be understood, I dare say, by most people. While on board the prize, whether at sea, or after reaching his port and placing his trust in security, the gay little middy is, to all intents and purposes, in the situation of a commanding officer. He is the captain for the time being, and as such is quite as much his own master as any officer, of any rank, can be. If he has the oppression of responsibility weighing upon his spirits on one hand, he has the pride of station, and the consciousness of being held worthy of his hire, to sustain him on the other; to say nothing of the honest and substantial pleasure which most men feel in the mere act of working hard, when sensible that their efforts are directed and quickened by a sense of duty. There are, besides, so many intrinsic sources of enjoyment belonging to such occupations, that I have observed midshipmen who have been selected for this duty always eager to be so employed a second time; and have seldom seen any of them come back to the ship without a very marked improvement in all respects.

But such return generally proved a very bitter affair at first; for they had to descend all at once from their high station of captains, to take up their old position as 'petty officers' in the depths of the

cockpit. Instead of holding in charge the lives of many individuals, and thousands of pounds worth of property, they felt themselves limited perhaps to the command of a jolly-boat on some cold frosty morning at Halifax, when despatched to the butcher's wharf to fetch off two or three quarters of beef for the ship's company's dinner! And, instead of walking omnipotently on the weather-side of their own prize's quarter-deck, directing the course, ordering sail to be set, or determining the ship's place by an appeal to the heavens, they found themselves jammed imperiously over to the lee-side, to get drenched by the rain, and chilled by the wind out of the odious mizen-staysail, that abomination of all poor middies! Then, in place of feeling that others were looking up to them for orders, and relying upon their resources to guide them, they had the mortification of being knocked about by persons for whose knowledge they had sometimes but little respect, on services which they knew, or thought they knew, to be useless, and which were frequently not only disagreeable, but humiliating in their nature.

Nevertheless, I think there can be no doubt that even this sore feeling of annoyance had an admirable effect in the long-run. Medicine is often not the less salutary for being unpalatable; and I am now well convinced that our youngsters were all the better for these alternations of power and submission. Their juvenile pride, indeed, was often sorely wounded when, after returning from a prize, they were called upon to execute duties beneath what they considered their true dignity: and, at first, the habits of recently exercised authority accorded but indifferently with those of prompt obedience. But the lessons of self-knowledge which this course of discipline was calculated to teach, seldom failed to give an impulse to the mental powers of those who really had any powers to set in motion. If they were mere ninnies, indeed, then, of course, neither this nor any other system of trials could stimulate them into sense or energy. But on those who actually possessed talents, or who were sincerely zealous, the usual effect was, to impart higher motives to work out their apprenticeship with credit, and to deserve, if not to win permanently, that enviable station, of which these temporary commands had given them a tolerably just idea.

Independently, too, of this animating result, it is very well known that much instruction in the difficult art of command may be taught through the medium of obedience alone. For the mere knowledge of what is required to be done will not always be accompanied by an acquaintance with the best way of accomplishing a given piece of service. We must understand the nature of the instruments by which the work is to be executed, otherwise our force is wasted, our tools blunted, and the whole task bungled. Unless, indeed, a commanding officer have learned, from actual experience, what it is to feel as a subordinate, not once or twice, but on a great variety of occasions, he will hardly be able to turn the capacities of those under his command to their full account. Instead of cementing his crew into one compact mass, and so bringing their united forces to bear upon the objects required by the public service, he will waste and dissipate their strength by misdirected applications of their divided and often conflicting energies; while his own temper may too frequently be lost in punishments, which might have been spared, had he only learned, by personal experience, what were likely to be the feelings and wishes of his inferiors.

But an officer who, in his own person, has gone through a full course of rigid obedience, and especially if he have occasionally mixed habits of command with those of submission to higher authority, and thus instructed himself in the peculiar difficulties of each situation, will be able, under like circumstances, to produce very different results from those just described. He will find little or no difficulty in divining the feelings of those under his orders; and though, if the number of his crew be great, there must ever be a considerable diversity of sentiment amongst them, yet, in most cases, he will be enabled to strike a pretty fair average as to the general wish, and thus secure the hearty co-operation of the majority of those he desires to put in motion.

A naval life, as I have before remarked, offers a singular mixture of energetic action and of passive routine; and it requires a good deal of skill on the part of the captain to mingle these qualities together, in such a way that there shall appear nothing inconsistent or abrupt in the transition from a state of comparative repose to one of high excitement. And it is well to bear in mind, that the most instructive lessons on this score are generally those taught in the early stages of the service. Yet it should be recollected, also, that the unpopularity of an officer with the junior part of those under his command seldom proves much against him; for it is only from a station many years in advance that his conduct can be viewed by them, in order to a fair estimate being formed of his professional character. I have, accordingly, been a good deal amused, and sometimes rather edified, by reading in my early letters the most unmeasured censure of my commanding officer for acts which I can now discover to have been not only judicious in themselves, but very kindly intended to me personally.

As time rolled on, various incidents arose to change the current of our thoughts, and in some degree, also, to alter the character of the duties upon which the younger midshipmen of the flagship were employed, and the occupations and amusements by which that very interesting period of our wandering life was diversified. In the spring of 1806, our patron, Sir Andrew Mitchell, the commander-in-chief, died, and in one moment the fortunes of all his followers were quite broken up. The influence we had derived from his protection was so completely gone, that I think we even fell back beyond our proper station by the reaction of neglect, if I may so call it. How others bore this loss I can hardly say; but I remember the desolate feeling which pressed upon me by so unexpected a calamity, as I gradually became sensible of being left once more altogether adrift.

But although our excellent friend the Admiral was gone, it did not occur to us to say we would not be comforted; on the contrary, it now became our business, more than ever, to impart, if we could, fresh vigour to those independent exertions, of which heretofore we had only been talking. The first and most obvious thing to be done was to direct our friends at home, without delay,

to make acquaintance with the new Admiral, whoever he might be, so as to induce him to let us fall into his wake. I need hardly mention, that, unless in cases of extraordinary good fortune, or extraordinary good interest, an officer's chance of promotion abroad is very small, unless he either gets actually into the flag-ship, or occupies a place on the Admiral's list of protégés while serving in some other vessel of the squadron. By far the most advantageous method, however, for those who are near the period of being eligible for promotion, is to get, if possible, directly under the shadow of the flag itself. Accordingly, I laid myself out with all industry for this object, and, thanks to my active friends at home, succeeded in obtaining a place on the list of the commander-in-chief appointed to the Halifax station.

Early in 1806 the new Admiral arrived at Halifax; and within a month afterwards his flag was shifted from the Leander to the Leopard, also of fifty guns; and, along with it, several of the officers, and most of our young party, were transferred to the newly-come ship.

It is impossible to describe the degree of regret, I might almost dignify it by the name of sorrow, with which some of us left the Leander, whose good old wooden walls had formed our house and home for upwards of four years. Even if I could describe what was felt upon this occasion, I fear it might meet with some ridicule.

This interval sounds like a short period; but when it is considered that while it was passing over our heads, a change had taken place in most of our lives and fortunes far greater than had ever occurred before, or can probably ever occur again, the sentiment will not appear so trivial. I, at least, who came to sea when not much above thirteen, may be said to have lived many more years than four in this interval. I had not grown up to manhood, indeed, or even come near it; but I had often been called upon to perform manly duties, and, instead of being held with my 'head under water,' had been allowed to swim about on the surface of things, and to work out my own station, such as it was, in all freedom and happiness.

The transfer, however, from one ship to the other was fraught with great advantages to me; though it certainly cost a bitter pang to take leave of the well-known cockpit and tiers and wings of the dear old ship, every beam and carlin of which I recollect to this hour; and can recall, as if it had occurred this morning, the restless feeling with which I took my last meal (a bowl of cocoa and a dry biscuit) in the larboard berth, at the substantial deal table at which I had sat for so many years. "Shall I ever be so happy in any ship again?" was my exclamation; little dreaming that things in this excellent world of ours, if we chance to have any good fortune, and are ready to 'back up our luck' by industry, may become better and better every day, instead of growing worse and worse on our hands, as too many moralists pretend.

On first joining the Leander, I had been considered, of course, a mere youngster, or 'boy of the first class,' as the rating is called, and had grown up so gradually along with the older mids, that the relative distance between us maintained itself in a most mortifying degree. This existed less in essentials than in trifles; for in times of real service, (for instance when prizes were sent away,) the selection of officers to conduct them was not determined by stature or by age, or even by length of service, but by activity and practical knowledge. Yet this very distinction often brought about still more provoking humiliations; for the big hands were not always pleased that such whelps, as we were called in their uncourteous vocabulary, should have charge of a lieutenant's watch, or be sent away in a detained vessel, when they, so much older in the service, were obliged to remain behind, to perform double duty on the lee-side of the quarter-deck. Such things were characterised in the cockpit below as 'an infernal shame,' 'blasted hard,' and so forth. When, therefore, these arbitrary physical-force gentlemen had us again, but too literally, on the hip, we were sometimes made to feel, in spite of our temporary dignity, that we were but younkers after all.

How long this state of things might have lasted I do not exactly know; though I suppose we should, by and by, have published our Declaration of Independence, and set up for ourselves. Fortunately this was unnecessary; for, as soon as the change of ships took place, we came amongst a new set of messmates, and, from the first, took very good care to assert and to maintain our proper station. Indeed, there no one intruded who could gainsay this; for none of our messmates in the new ship had known us in our old character of squealers, squeakers, younkers, whelps, rubbish, or by whatever more disparaging epithets we had been distinguished in our powder-monkey days, now so happily gone by!

But, after all is said and done, the hardships of any young middy's early life, and of ours in particular, are so trifling, if taken in good part, that it is more in joke than anything else I have here alluded to the tyrannical capers cut over us by the older hands. In fact, I am really obliged to tax my memory rather closely before recollecting a single circumstance essentially oppressive; while I can look back with the greatest delight to kindnesses of the most valuable nature, and to friendships which, after standing the wear and tear of a full quarter of a century, have only become more interesting and useful by the effects of time. I find, in one of my old letters, a passing notice of some of the advantages and drawbacks attendant upon serving in a flag-ship; and, as it was written under the influence of the moment, I shall not attempt to improve the expression, but give it as it stands.

"I shall be sorry to leave my old ship the Leander, for I have formed an attachment to her, which is natural, after having so long dwelled on board of her. But I shall not have to regret the loss of many companions; that is already over. I have changed my messmates at least four times. Many of them have been promoted; some have been discharged into other ships; a few, having become tired of the service, have gone off in disgust; and some have died. In short, from one cause or other, there has been such a constant change, that there are very few of us now left who have witnessed the whole scene from the beginning to the end. All this, however annoying it may be at the time, has certainly its advantages;

for it gives us an insight into what is going on in the service, and we necessarily gain more information on this point by seeing so many persons in succession, than we should do from studying the same people over and over again every day. In the course of time, too, the regret at parting wears off, as we become more familiar with leave-takings."

CHAPTER XIX.

LAST VIEW OF BERMUDA.

THINGS very soon settled into their places in the new ship, and under the new regime. It is, indeed, the very essence of a naval life to carry itself on with a degree of uniformity which looks like instinct, and, in fact, does almost become so by long and rigid training of all its parts, in one fixed course of action. A steady purpose is kept ever in view, and this quality of the service enables us to surmount numberless obstructions, calculated, one might imagine, rather to retard than to advance our objects.

We soon put to sea again, roved about the Atlantic, visited the West Indies, Bermuda, and the coast of America, capturing French and Spaniards, and detaining Americans, with little or no compunction; enjoying ourselves in port, growling at sea, and forming a thousand projects for future promotion and for present enjoyment. Although I was extremely fortunate in being permitted to make sundry expeditions on shore, I have in vain examined the old notes kept on these excursions for materials of present interest. Almost all the incidents therein related appear boyish and flat; while the information is of so common-place a nature, that the same things, much better told, may certainly be found in most books respecting those countries.

In a journal written during a short Bermudian trip, I find hardly anything but a set of those high-flown expressions in admiration of the scenery, which travellers not unnaturally are so liable to substitute for true description.

It is difficult enough to say what true description is; and ten times more difficult, I suspect, to accomplish the task when its nature has been pointed out. It is a mighty easy affair for a critic to tell a traveller 'that he has nothing to do but relate what he sees, and to tell in plain language what he feels.' He might as well say to a jockey at the starting-post, that he had nothing to do, in order to win the race, but to bring in his horse first to the goal. There are a hundred details to be attended to in both cases with which the uninitiated have no acquaintance, and for which, accordingly, they make no allowance; and it is perhaps quite right that none should be made. If the race be lost, one cares little for the good excuses by which the failure may be justified; if the object be gained, the applause which follows is given without much reference to the particulars by which the success has been brought about. This holds true in most things, and in none more than in descriptions of scenery, which, after all, in order to be effective, must include in their very essence a degree of poetical colouring which few men have it in their power to supply. To describe well, is exactly like painting well: if the artist possess true genius, like Claude of old, or Turner now, the picture will not only be admirable, but may appear to have been executed with perfect ease. Let any one else, however, take the brush, and see what will be the result!

The most pleasing and most exact description which I know of Bermuda is to be found in Moore's "Odes and Epistles," a work published many years ago. The reason why his account exceeds in beauty as well as in precision that of other men, probably is, that the scenes described lie so much beyond the scope of ordinary observation in colder climates, and the feelings which they excite in the beholder are so much higher than those produced by the scenery we have been accustomed to look at, that, unless the imagination be deeply drawn upon, and the diction sustained at a correspondent pitch, the words alone strike the ear, while the listener's fancy remains where it was. In Moore's account there is not only no exaggeration, but, on the contrary, a wonderful degree of temperance in the midst of a feast which, to his rich fancy, must have been peculiarly tempting. He has contrived, by a magic peculiarly his own, yet without departing from the truth, to sketch what was before him with a fervour which those who have never been on the spot might well be excused for setting down as the sport of the poet's invention. But he knows, at least as well as any one of the tens of thousands of his admiring readers, that, with all his genius and vigour, as well as delicacy of thought, and with all his powers of expression, his numbers, polish them as he may, must still fall short of nature, even in her quietest mood. And thence, while he learns modesty, he is likewise taught the art by which alone he can hope to enter the field with any chance of success. It is not by depicting, however graphically, as it is called, one or two, or even one hundred striking points in the landscape, that the bewitching effect of Moore's description is produced; but by selecting, as it were by chance, those features which the instinct of his genius and exquisite taste tells him are characteristic; and afterwards, by combining these, at his own choice, in such a way as to give them, in the fullest sense of the word, the character of generalisation, without depriving them of any part of their individuality. His descriptions of scenery, accordingly, seem to form the true *beau idéal* of the art, which, though very different from mere copies of nature, are perhaps something better.

An ordinary traveller would tell us the number and extent of the islands grouped together in one view, with the size and aspect of the fishing-boats, the shape of the houses, the names of the trees, and the various colours of the coral seen through the clear and shallow water, in the narrow passages which divide these singular clusters; but at the end of the account we should be left nearly where we were, and really be little more acquainted with the scenery of the spot than if we had been examining a map, illustrated merely by a set of sailing directions for entering the port.

St. George's Town, such a writer would say, the seat of government, nestles itself in a delightful little valley, on the south-eastern side of a small island, the most eastern of the group known by

the name of Bermudas, or the Summer Islands, the 'still vext Bermoothes' of Shakspeare. The shores of this valley form the northern side of a diminutive and shallow but very secure harbour, of the same name with the island. No ship larger than a sloop of war can enter this snuggest of ports, in consequence of a coral bar or ledge drawn across the entrance. The appearance of the town, viewed from the Barrack-hill opposite, is beautiful. The houses, mostly very small, and of the purest white, lie scattered about irregularly amongst trees of such obviously foreign growth, that the consciousness of being in a strange land strikes the senses at once. The long, broad, thickly-matted leaves of the plantain, banana, and calabash, together with various tall members of the palm tribe, which afford a perfect shade to the little cedar-built verandas encircling most of these dwellings, are all so characteristic of the climate, and so well suited to the rest of the scene, that in viewing them we readily yield up our imagination, and half consent to believe that we are in another world; somewhat in the same way that we relinquish all control over the reason at an opera, and, giving the reins to our fancy, follow wherever the witchery of the music, and the acting, and the scenery, may happen to transport us. Amongst these tropical-looking trees, we discover the orange, the cedar, and the lime; and on examining more closely the ground upon which they stand, the commonest weed appears to be the geranium, and the shrubs mostly myrtles. Or if we choose to go afloat with a fair wind and in fine weather, which can almost always be reckoned upon, we sail through openings hardly wide enough for a boat, between islets covered over so thickly with the exuberant verdure of this fairy region, from the very top to the water's edge, that we can scarcely see the ground, and often find difficulty in landing.

Owing to the sea at Bermuda being quite clear, the bottom may be seen at the depth of many fathoms; and this, when not spread with a coating of the whitest sand, is overlaid with a gorgeous natural mosaic, of various-coloured corallines, long brilliant weeds, and innumerable specimens of the sponge tribe, of a purple, red, or green colour, and often of a bright saffron, approaching to yellow. The intermediate spaces lying between the rocks form a submarine carpet spangled over with shells, some of them not inferior in point of beauty to the corals. The variety in the scenery, both terrestrial and aquatic, is accordingly so great, that hardly any two points of view appear quite alike; while every hundred yards brings out new combinations of lights and shades, colours and forms.

After passing the ferry at the western end of George's Island, the traveller lands on the great island, dignified, by reason of its extent, with the name of the Continent; and, though only twelve miles in length, and two in breadth, it is looked upon by the natives as a prodigious expanse of territory; and truly so it is, compared to any other of their three hundred and sixty-five islands. It is certain that some hundreds of rocks may actually be counted above water in this singular cluster, which stands alone in the middle of the Atlantic, not unlike one of those beautiful nebulæ in the heavens, to ordinary sight only specks or little clouds, but which, when viewed through the telescopes of Herschel, or South, or Struve, are discovered to be collections of separate stars.

In the middle of this continent lies an extensive basin or arm of the sea, called the Great Sound, which may be passed in two ways. One road leads along the rocky beach, on which the sea breaks with prodigious violence when the wind is from the north. The other path strikes inland, and brings the traveller eventually in sight of many beautiful inlets, Hamilton Harbour, Port Royal Bay, and others, surrounded by hills, all clad with the richest verdure, and studded over with villages and insulated cottages. The surface of the water remains so perfectly smooth and still in some of these coves, from their being what is called land-locked, that is, nearly shut out from the open sea all round, that it reflects the banks, skies, and trees, in a manner very rarely witnessed elsewhere. These natural mirrors are broken only at those places where the pretty little boats of the island, with sharp-pointed sails flapping in the calm, are rowed backwards and forwards by the merry-hearted negro slaves.

So much for the story of a mere traveller, writing in plain prose. But I cannot deny myself the pleasure of pilfering a little from those stores of the poet above alluded to, and which, though amply enjoyed by the public at the time, have been so much outshone by the lustre of what the same pencil has since produced, that, by very many eyes fully capable of appreciating their merit, they may, perhaps, never yet have been perused. To such persons the following lines will have the advantage of novelty, while I can safely answer for their fidelity. These poems happen also to have been written at the very time (1804) when I was myself on the spot, and when, with what little store of imagination any mid can be supposed to possess, I was feeling exactly as the poet did.

The epistle from which these extracts are taken is addressed to the Dowager Marchioness of Donegall; and after some happy allusions to her ladyship's taste and skill as an artist, it goes on thus:

"Have you not oft, in nightly vision, stray'd
To the pure isles of ever-blooming shade,
Which bards of old with kindly magic placed
For happy spirits in the Atlantic waste?
There, as eternal gales, with fragrance warm,
Breathed from Elysium through each shadowy form,
In eloquence of eye, and dreams of song,
They charm'd their lapse of nightless hours along!
Nor yet in song that mortal ear may suit,
For every spirit was itself a lute,
Where virtue waken'd, with Elysian breeze,
Pure tones of thought and mental harmonies!
Believe me, lady, when the zephyrs bland
Floated our bark to this enchanted land,
These leafy isles, upon the ocean thrown,
Like studs of emerald o'er a silver zone;
Not all the charm that ethnic fancy gave
To blessed arbours o'er the western wave,
Could wake a dream more soothing or sublime,
Of bowers ethereal and the spirits' clime!

The morn was lovely, every wave was still,
When the first perfume of a cedar-hill
Sweetly awaked us, and, with smiling charms,
The fairy harbour woo'd us to its arms.

Gently we stole, before the languid wind,
Through plantain shades, that, like an awning, twined
And kiss'd on either side the wanton sails,
Breathing our welcome to these vernal vales;
While, far reflected o'er the wave serene,
Each wooded island shed so soft a green,
That the enamour'd keel, with whispering play,
Through liquid herbage seem'd to steal its way!
Never did weary bark more sweetly glide,
Or rest its anchor in a lovelier tide!
Along the margin many a brilliant dome,
White as the palace of a Lapland gnome,
Brighten'd the wave; in every myrtle grove
Secluded bashful, like a shrine of love,
Some elfin mansion sparkled through the shade;
And, while the foliage interposing play'd,
Wreathing the structure into various grace,
Fancy would love, in many a form, to trace
The flowery capital, the shaft, the porch,
And dream of temples, till her kindling torch
Lighted me back to all the glorious days
Of Attic genius; and I seem'd to gaze
On marble, from the rich Pentelic mount,
Gracing the umbrage of some naiad's fount."

Even in the unpretending shape of footnotes to the above poem, we have something nearly as good as the numbers themselves. Indeed, the prose of some poets would seem to partake, almost insensibly, of the refined diction of their verse, without the constraint of its limitations. So that we can often discover, not only in the rhythm, but also in the thoughts which even their simplest language conveys, distinct traces of the original poetry, from which, after all, it only makes a slight departure, analogous to that practised by musicians in their variations to well-known airs.

In speaking of his arrival at Bermuda, Mr. Moore has these words, in which it is quite amusing to see how the witchery of the art runs away with the artist, and the gods make him poetical, in spite of his evident desire to be purely and soberly descriptive.

"Nothing," says he, "can be more romantic than the little harbour of St. George's. The number of beautiful islets, the singular clearness of the water, and the animated play of the graceful little boats, gliding for ever between the islands, and seeming to sail from one cedar-grove to another, form altogether the sweetest miniature of nature that can be imagined."

"The water," he adds at another place, "is so beautifully clear around these islands, that the rocks are seen to a very great depth; and as we entered the harbour, they appeared to us so near the surface, that it seemed impossible we should not strike on them. There is no necessity, of course, for heaving the lead; and the negro pilot, looking down at the rocks from the bow of the ship, takes her through this difficult navigation with a skill and confidence which seem to astonish some of the oldest sailors."

And, finally, he remarks, that "among the many charms which Bermuda has for a poetic eye, we cannot for an instant forget that it is the scene of Shakspeare's Tempest; and that here he conjured up the 'delicate Ariel,' who alone is worth the whole heaven of ancient mythology*."

* Moore's Epistles, Odes, and other Poems. 4to. London, 1806. Page 42. Epistle III.

CHAPTER XX.

RETURN TO ENGLAND.

We sailed from these "Summer Islands," as they are called in the old maps, in His Majesty's ship Leopard, on the 27th of February 1808, and anchored in Cawsand Bay, at Plymouth, on the 23d of March. On our way home we touched at Fayal, one of the Azores, merely to get fruit and vegetables; after which, without anchoring, we threaded our way to the eastward along the southern shore of Terceira, so called from its standing the third in that singular group of volcanic mountains, known by the name of the Western Islands.

As I afterwards visited these islands under more advantageous circumstances, I shall say nothing of them at present, except that the Peak of Pico, the most remarkable of all the Azores, appeared in greater beauty than I ever had the fortune to see it at any subsequent period. Its summit, which rises to the height of about nine thousand feet, was then covered with snow; and nothing could be more striking than its appearance, as we first saw it projected upon a sky so dark, that by the contrast it seemed almost black. Teneriffe, it may be mentioned, is never, at any time, so effective, as a grand-looking object at least, when viewed from a distance, as Pico almost always appears, whether it be near or remote. The Peak of Teneriffe, properly so called, rises to the height of more than twelve thousand feet, which is, at least, three thousand feet higher than Pico. But there will be found this remarkable difference between the two: the sugar-loaf of Teneriffe starts from the level of a plain or ridge seven or eight thousand feet high, extending from end to end of a large island; on the other hand, the beautiful cone of Pico takes its rise directly from the sea, not abruptly, but gradually; and it thus presents, when viewed from a distance, an object decidedly more splendid than its rival peak in the Canaries.

It is not mere height, we must recollect, which constitutes the magnificence of a mountain, any more than mere magnitude determines the grandeur of an architectural structure. The temple of Neptune at Pæstum is a grander building by far than the immense Duomo of Milan; and, in the same way, Gibraltar is much more striking than most parts of the clumsy Andes, although the Cordilleras of South America are generally ten times higher than the celebrated rock just mentioned; the one being seventeen hundred, and the other seventeen thousand feet above the sea. It is true, that innumerable associations interfere to disturb and bias, or more properly to regulate, the judgment in these cases. While the whole current of our previously formed ideas, therefore, dispose us to prefer the celebrated Teneriffe, the superiority of Pico in apparent altitude, in symmetry, and even in sublimity of character as a volcanic mountain, are so indisputable, that I have often wondered how so little was known of this great ornament of the Azores, lying almost at the threshold of the British Channel.

I am very proud of being an honorary member of the Yacht Club, and, as such, should rejoice greatly if I had influence enough with any of my

brother amateur sailors to persuade them to make longer trips than they usually indulge in; for example, to those beautiful islands the Azores, which in the summer months would be a most agreeable excursion. In place of running races from Cowes, round the buoy of the Royal George, and back again; why, out of the many noble vessels which belong to the members of this very spirited and business-like Club, should not two or three, or twice as many, start from Spithead, like ships in earnest, and show who can soonest sail round Pico, and return to tell what they have seen of foreign parts? In such a trial, no small degree of skill and perseverance might come into play, and some discipline also, as well as a touch or two of science; whereas, at present, in most of our Yacht Club smooth-water races, the prominent feature is the quick sailing of the vessels. In such a trip as I have ventured to propose, the race would not always be won exclusively by the fastest sailer, as it now is; for, in proportion as these professional exploits were rendered difficult and complicated, so, I am convinced, the energies of our Club, as in the analogous case of the Navy, would rise to meet and overcome them. If not, as Dogberry says, "they are not the men I take them for."

We had a spanking fair wind from the Azores to Plymouth; and I shall not soon forget the sensations with which I once more caught sight of the cliffs of England. I had been absent on this my first trip more than five years and eight months; and, certainly, busier years and months could hardly have passed over any man's head. It is not easy to describe what one feels in putting his foot on British ground, after so long an interval. Not a single opportunity of writing had, I believe, ever been omitted on either side; so that a pretty constant and active intercourse had been kept up between my family and myself. The best correspondence, however, goes but a short way; and the wild sort of curiosity which I felt to see my friends (and, perhaps, to show-off to them) was very great.

Some of our party of mids evinced symptoms of being rather inclined to the mock-heroics, on the occasion of our arrival in Old England; and one clumsy chap suggested that, on first landing, we should all prostrate ourselves like Persians, and kiss our mother earth; a proposal which was received in the cockpit with acclamation. But as a midshipman is rarely sentimental except after supper, and this resolution was made over-night, it cooled before we landed next morning. Indeed, as the ground appeared wet and dirty (as it always is at Plymouth), and we were dressed out in 'our very best togs,' the proposed ceremony of the Cotow would have afforded some sport to the watermen, and to sundry groups of sea-port belles who lined the wharf, at that most elegant of spots called Mutton Cove.

We had quite enough on our hands, however, besides enacting such fooleries. Letters were to be written, announcing the important event of our return; and as it was very difficult, and we thought quite needless, to distinguish between the importance which such incidents bore in our own eyes, and the indifference with which they were viewed by the rest of mankind, we wrote as if nothing had ever before occurred in the world so interesting as the arrival of our ship. Projects innumerable were arranged for meetings; and if some expressions, indicative of an anxiety about future promotion, did slip in, these selfish considerations were overwhelmed for the time in the delightful prospect of a speedy visit to our friends and home.

But, besides these natural thoughts and feelings, there sprung up others which claimed our notice, and helped to make the first few days after reaching England a glorious sort of intoxication. The mere sight of a London newspaper, only a day or two old, was a phenomenon scarcely intelligible. The face of the country, the shops, the people, the carriages, looked all so different from what our eyes had been long accustomed to elsewhere, that it seemed as if, instead of having left the Azores only a week before, and Bermuda not a month, we must have been absent from them for years. Scarcely one person in fifty whom we met knew a word about those foreign places with which we had become so familiar; and, what mortified us still more, no mortal appeared at all interested by the Leopard's arrival, any more than if she had been a fishing-boat, in place of a 50-gun ship with an Admiral's flag at the fore. Up to this moment, whenever we anchored at Halifax, or Bermuda, or anywhere else, all the world was agog; and, of course, we pelting petty officers were parties in the distribution of the thunder; that is to say, we took good care to come in for a share of the notice which streamed down from the Admiral to the humblest of his followers. No matter where we touched at abroad, we always reckoned upon receiving a certain amount of attention; and, if nothing more substantial arose, we had at least the honour and glory of being gazed at by the black fellows, as we swaggered along, with dirks by our sides and cockades in our hats, as jolly young reefers as ever fancied themselves great officers. But at Plymouth, and still more at Portsmouth, to which we proceeded after a day or two, all our airs and graces were sadly neglected. And as for those hospitalities and other attentions which we had almost come to consider when we were abroad as a matter of right, and due to our present worth and high future prospects, they were clipped down in England to the troublesome importunity of a waterman canvassing for a fare, or to the compliments of a knowing shopkeeper on our taste in the articles he wished us to buy.

I learned, in after-years, that precisely on the same principle that no man is a hero to his own valet, a naval officer is seldom an object of much admiration at an English sea-port. Generally speaking, I suspect he will find that the further he strays from Spithead, the more attention he is likely to meet with. Malicious folks might say, that at home he is perhaps too well known; or, according to the uncourteous expression, 'better known than trusted;' and that, to be well received, he must contrive to outstrip his own history. But the explanation is readily made, without having recourse to so uncivil a theory; since, for one naval officer that figures like a comet at a foreign port, Halifax, for instance, or Naples, or the Cape, five hundred make their appearance at Portsmouth: so that, although the natives in Hampshire are not a whit less friendly to our cloth than

those of Nova Scotia, still, their means and their leisure would require to be fifty times greater before they could attempt to show a tithe of the hospitality we are sure to receive, not only in America, but in every other part of the world.

On our first arriving in England, all of us, the Admiral's followers, were in great hopes that he would be re-appointed to some other station, when we should have moved in a body along with him, to take our chance of promotion, as vacancies occurred. But in this expectation we were cruelly disappointed; for the flag being soon struck, we were thrown as much adrift as when our first patron, Sir Andrew Mitchell, died. A complete and final dispersion now took place amongst our old set, and all those ties which had sprung up amongst us, from a common round of duties and of interests during so many years, were broken up for ever. Some of the midshipmen, quite hopeless of advancement, and fairly sickened by long expectation, found their patience worn to a very small thread, which they now cut across altogether, and left the service. Others sought out fresh protectors; while some, trusting solely to their own fortunes, and their own right arms, aimed at employments in active service, where their zeal might bring them into notice, and their ability afterwards earn for them that promotion, which they could no longer hope to gain by favour alone.

In short, a general scatter took place; and, as nothing very obvious arose for me to do, I resolved to wait quietly; and, in the mean time, managed to get my name transferred to another ship's books, the captain of which, in consideration of my having been nearly six years from home, allowed me a fortnight's leave of absence; and off I set for Scotland.

To give anything like an account of the details of this visit is manifestly impossible, without sailing rather nearer the wind in domestic matters than would be quite suitable to a book of travels. But this I may say, that there certainly never was a happier middy than I, since the establishment of the important order of Reefers. The loss of two patrons in succession, and the consequent destruction of all my fine schemes for promotion, sat lightly on my young shoulders, which I then trusted were broad enough to bear a great deal more ill-luck. So I kept my spirits up, with the hope that, sooner or later, I might, in some way or other, be able to carve out my own professional fortunes.

It seems one of the proverbial characteristics of a naval officer, that he should not only be restless himself, but the cause of restlessness in others. I, at least, took pretty good care to keep up this distinguishing attribute of our troublesome class. In the first stages of a naval life, when the schoolboy, transformed into the midshipman, obtains a rating on the ship's books, places a uniform on his back, and without the slightest promise of a beard on his apple-chin, nevertheless conceives himself to be a person of first-rate consequence, he worries his friends to get him placed with a particular Admiral, or on board a particular ship. By and by he finds all his economy unequal to making both ends of his odious accounts meet; or, if serving abroad, he falls ill, and writes home that the climate does not agree with him; or he takes the pet, quarrels with his captain, abuses the service, and is trundled back for his pains, rather more perverse than he set out. If, however, he have head-piece enough to avoid such serious scrapes as these, he probably neglects to write home, and thus wears and tears his anxious mother's heart out, by fears which have no foundation. In short, I fancy no mid ever served his six years without establishing, by hook or by crook, his undoubted claim to being a very considerable plague to all connected with him.

As the weary period of probation draws to a close, our young gentleman generally begins to quake a bit; for he now feels, that unless he make some sort of a show, behaves with all propriety, and proves himself worthy of promotion, he has no good right to expect that his friends are to bestir themselves in his behalf. He soon discovers, much to his discomfiture, that there are probably many hundreds of older and abler men than himself entitled to go before him, some of whom have passed their examinations for years, and almost all of them having infinitely stronger claims to advancement from their services than any of which he can boast. Unless, therefore, he himself, or his friends, can manage to bring some other lever into operation, more powerful than the mere fact of his having served the allotted period of six years, it is demonstrable that he may remain a midshipman, as many unfortunate fellows are compelled to do, all the rest of his life.

This state of things (whether it be right or whether it be wrong) is so well understood now-a-days by all the parties concerned, that no mortal, if he knows what he is about, ever dreams of standing on the insulated ground of mere eligibility, or the *still* more dangerous footing of 'claims.' The inevitable risk, which a young person incurs by resting his application on such pretensions, is, that his mouth can be stopped at any moment by a numerous list of other men, whose claims are far higher than his own, and who, if merit or services are to regulate such matters, even he himself cannot deny, are entitled to prior notice. Accordingly, no one, or I ought perhaps to say, hardly any one, will act wisely to dwell much on what he is entitled to, or fancies he is entitled to, when soliciting advancement. He may let his services peep out, if he will; but if he puts them forward too broadly, he actually removes one of his best chances of success; for what person who has the undisputed power either to grant or to refuse an application, will not be disinclined to yield to representations which remove from himself all merit in the gift? It does very well to talk (amongst one's friends, or over a bottle) of rights, and justice, and independence, and claims, and the vile neglect of 'impatient merit,' and so forth; but when we actually enter the great field of patronage, we must conform to the customs in established use there; or, in other words, be content to pocket a little of our dignity, and give in exchange for what we solicit, that return which the possessors of the good things require. If our object be the attainment of a certain point, we must condescend to search for it in the manner which experience has shown is most likely to succeed.

In adopting this rule, however, there is one especial consideration which should be kept con-

stantly in mind. We must never allow the motive, be it what it may, to seduce us into terms unworthy of the station we occupy in society, or of that which we aspire to fill in our particular profession. This maxim rests upon the commonplace but high ground of moral obligation: at present, however, I refer to it chiefly in a purely selfish, or what is called a worldly point of view. For public men become so skilful in the business of official detail, that they see at once through all kinds of false pretences, very speedily detect unworthy motives, and despise any servile flexure. At the same time, nothing can be more natural than that an official person, or indeed any other man, should prefer granting a request to one who will receive it as a boon, than to an applicant who, without possessing more merit than his rival candidate, shows that he considers the favour as his right, and who, consequently, will not consent to pay back any gratitude for the gift. Of two suitors, therefore, whose real claims are supposed to be equal, there can be no doubt which of them is most likely to succeed—he who sticks up doggedly for his claims—or he who, trusting to the official man's discernment to do him justice, takes care to show, likewise, that he relies upon his patron's favour to grant the request, and that, if successful, he will be grateful.

Few people indeed will deny that, in cases of equal claims, the applicant who takes the course most agreeable to a person in power will have the best chance of success; but even where the candidates' pretensions are unequal, the same line of conduct will generally prove the best. It is seldom difficult for those who are in authority to give to things the particular aspect most suitable to their own views. So that the suitor, whatever be his opinions, or those of his friends, respecting his extraordinary merits, will do well to recollect that, besides his own eyes, there are many others which are viewing his claims through a very different medium. He may rest assured, therefore, that, unless he can win some portion of the confidence and the good-will of the authorities to whom he is applying, there is little chance of full justice being done to his suit.

It seems a great mistake to suppose that this quiet and unpretending deportment, on the part of an officer, when trying to bring his services into notice, or to gain a wider field for the exercise of his talents, is inconsistent with the independence and true dignity of his professional character. In fact, it is the noisy, bullying, vituperative, or growling styles, which carry with them the real degradation; and perhaps public men are never more completely justified in their refusal of favours than when they are applied to in terms much more suitable to Wapping than to the Waiting-room.

At first sight, it certainly looks very hard to see old stagers grumbling away their existence in disappointed hopes; yet there can be little doubt that the navy, and of course the country at large, are essentially better served by the present system of employing active, young, and cheerful-minded officers, than they ever could be by any imaginable system of promotion by seniority.

It must not be forgotten, indeed, that, at a certain stage of the profession, the arrangement by which officers are promoted in turn is already made the rule, and has long been so; but, by a wise regulation, it does not come into operation before the rank of post-captain has been attained. Antecedent to this period, there must occur ample opportunities of weeding out those persons who, if the rule of mere seniority were adopted, would exceedingly embarrass the navy list.

It is perhaps no paradox to assert, that the more an officer depends upon pure favour for his early advancement, if he be a right-minded person, the more strongly will he feel the necessity of showing, by his future exertions, that such patronage has not been ill-bestowed. Generally speaking, I think it is observable in the service that officers who are the most certain of getting on are also among the most earnest in their endeavours to justify, as far as depends upon themselves, those acts of distinction by which they have been and are still to be put before older men, perhaps no less worthy of promotion. The opinion will hardly be controverted, that persons who are the most gentlemanlike in their habits of thought, in sentiment, and in manners, supposing their talents and opportunities alike, usually make the best officers.

I believe it will be found that it is this, amongst many other reasons, which renders it of so much consequence to the well-being of the navy, and to the maintenance of its high tone both of feeling and of action (the qualities upon which, in the end, nearly all its value to the country will be found to rest), that we should encourage men of family to enter the navy. It is not the mere possession of rank which gives efficacy to the services of such persons; since quite as good blood, for the ordinary purposes of daily business, might be found in profusion in the other walks of society. But what is indispensably required in the naval profession, above all others, if its present lofty station is to be preserved, is not alone great mental powers, or zeal, or industry, or experience, or even all these combined, to any conceivable amount, but the essential spirit, if I may so term it, of a gentleman. This quality in the character of an officer must by some means be made to predominate, and, as it were, to exalt all the rest. Without this, the navy would be nothing, or worse than nothing; it would certainly become ruinous and disgraceful to the country.

In other professions having any claims to what is called liberality of object, the same spirit is undoubtedly more or less required; but in the navy it may well be said to be all in all. It would, perhaps, occupy too much space at present to show why this is necessarily the case; but one of the reasons seems to be, that many of the most important duties of a naval officer are, and ever must be, performed without witnesses, and often beyond the reach of scrutiny. Consequently, any dereliction on his part is extremely difficult of detection. Besides which, the power necessarily placed in an officer's hands, in all the steps of his rise, but particularly in the higher walks, is of such a nature, that, unless it be regulated by the principles which form the distinguishing features in the character of a gentleman, it is apt to degenerate into tyranny and oppression. All this is now so generally felt and acknowledged, that it would be easy to point out innumerable occasions upon which, unless officers were controlled by this

curious and almost magical influence, this innate sense of honour, which is equally true to every climate, and to every possible variety of incident that can arise, in the endless complications and embarrassments of a naval life; this service, now so elevated in its rank in the world, would inevitably decline. The country would discover the evils of this fatal deterioration in its moments of need, but probably not till it was too late for reparation. This leading principle of all success, this genuine point of honour, if once let slip, is not to be recalled at a word; and, at all events, it should be remembered by the advocates of change, how many long years it has cost to place the Navy where it now stands; and let them take care not to risk its destruction by too rude attempts to reform what works so well already.

It may be asked, as I have often heard it scornfully asked when these views have been advanced, "Are no gentlemen to be found beyond the pale of the higher classes? and if there are, why push men of rank forward in the service, as we see done every day, with such manifest injustice to older officers, and equally good men?"

I think the practical answer to this natural remark most easy. There are, no doubt, to be found many gentlemen, as sound and true, out of the aristocracy, as if their blood were derived from that of 'all the Howards;' but it becomes a question, bearing directly upon the purpose in hand, to determine in what proportion, and for how long a time, the true gentlemanlike spirit, above alluded to, actually existing in the country, in those ranks of society which are not of the aristocracy, would continue to exist, in its genuine and practically useful purity, if the aristocratical classes of the community were destroyed, or their means of influencing the rest of the nation essentially diminished? It seems more than probable, that, after no very long interval of time, consequent upon such a catastrophe as should break down these distinctions of rank, there would be found little or none of this ennobling or chivalrous element of our nature left behind throughout the land.

One of the duties of the aristocracy, and by no means their least important function, is to keep alive this sacred fire, this quality by which, after all, 'earthly power doth show likest God's.' It is they, and they alone, who can give a right tone to manners, by setting the fashion in everything which is true in principle, or practically wise in morals and in politics, and by encouraging science, letters, and the fine arts, or otherwise contributing to soften the asperities of vulgar life. This is the true intent and purpose of a powerful aristocracy; and if its obligations be duly fulfilled, its members execute a task not only of the highest possible utility to the country, but one which, for many reasons, no other class has the means even of attempting to perform.

Let the scoffers at high rank and unequal wealth say what they please, there can be no doubt, that since these are the obligations which time has fixed, no matter how or when, upon the aristocracy of this country, so, in the main, the persons who compose that order actually perform, and indeed must always continue to perform, their duty, as long as the merciless searchings of our inquisitorial press, goaded on by the vigilance and insatiable curiosity of public opinion, shall place all its members, all their property, and all their proceedings, in the fullest possible review before the world.

Those who have formed a different conception of the structure of English society will not go along with me, perhaps, in what follows; but I am persuaded, that precisely what the aristocracy does, on the great scale, for the community at large, in maintaining at a high level the pure standard of national manners, the introduction of a proportionate number of persons of good family into the Navy, does for that service in particular.

There are, undoubtedly, very many officers now in the service who are not sprung from the class alluded to, but who possess this gentlemanlike spirit as completely as any nobleman, or nobleman's son, that ever lived. But it is probable that even these officers themselves are every way sensible of the value of the aristocratical companionship we are speaking of; and in practice they certainly experience great advantage from the countenance it lends to those habits to which, otherwise, they might not be able single-handed to give adequate currency. Besides, it is probably from this very source that they have derived the greater part of these feelings, which it is their pride to cherish and extend.

The truth of these positions does not appear to be essentially lessened by saying that there exist exceptions to the rule, and that members of the aristocratical branch of the community, whose conduct furnishes no good example are to be found in the Navy, as elsewhere. I speak, and with confidence, of what generally occurs; and certain I am, that as the service has derived very high advantages from this admixture, so, to stop the source from whence such rich blood flows would be to risk the action of the very heart of our system.

"But," I have heard it said, "why not put matters in this respect on a fair and equitable footing? If this sprinkling of the aristocracy do good, as you say it does, to the spirit of the Navy, why not let men of family enter the field on equal terms with the rest, and so take their chance with men of humbler birth?"

The simplest answer to this appears to be, that, as there is no method by which such persons can be impressed into the service, we must of necessity enter into some tacit kind of compromise, and agree to take them upon the best terms for which we can enlist them as volunteers. What the men of family say upon the occasion seems to be perfectly reasonable, and strictly in accordance with everything else in the constitution of English society. By the arrangements of our system, the growth of centuries of trial, all classes in the community, without exception, are not only left free to do what they prefer, but they are actually encouraged by bounties, varied in a thousand shapes, to follow up as zealously as possible that course of action which, in the end, turns out best for themselves; and this, as long as they are left free, will always be best for their country. Such persons say, or their parents say for them, when they are balancing as to what profession they shall follow, that unless they are tolerably sure of speedy promotion in the Navy (supposing them to be duly qualified), they can do better for them-

selves by going into some other walk of life, where their fortune, or their family influence, will be sure to raise them sooner to that station in society which they are justified in expecting to reach.

It is quite true there is no such express stipulation as this made respecting the rapid, or, as it is called, unfair promotion of young men of family; but it seems perfectly clear, that unless they were certain, or next to certain, of getting on shortly after becoming eligible to the different ranks, such persons would speedily cease to exist in the Navy at all. This abstraction of men of rank from the service, though it might perhaps be hailed as an advantage by a few short-sighted observers, would most inevitably and speedily prove injurious to many of those minute and often unseen, but invaluable, refinements by which the character of the profession is preserved in its purity, and by which it has hitherto been enabled to exist unshaken through the severest trials of danger, difficulty, and temptation.

Those who object to this system are very much mistaken, however, if they suppose that because the young men in question are promoted sooner than their companions, they are, at any stage of the profession, exempted, even in the slightest degree, from all its pains and penalties in the event of error; or that they are permitted to do their duty one whit more negligently than their less fortunate companions. There is no such thing as a privileged class in the Navy. All ranks and orders are alike in respect to the discipline. It certainly is true, and most important to remark, that, in practice, these gentlemen get into fewer scrapes than others. This, however, I have always considered to arise from the extreme pain which a well-bred man feels on receiving just censure, and also from that habitual delicacy of mind, which it is one of the chief points of good manners to teach. Some officers are content to work only so much as the rules of the service strictly require; but a man of honour holds it to be disgraceful not to do his duty at all times to the very best of his powers.

An illustrious example of the beneficial effects of high rank in maintaining the character of the service will here suggest itself to every one. Nor can there be a doubt that the zeal and success with which His late Majesty, King William IV., devoted so great a portion of his life to the active duties of the Navy, will be referred to, for centuries to come, not only with pride and gratitude by the country, but with eminent advantage to every class of officers.

It may be said, that men of family enter the Navy, like others, at so young an age, that they cannot have acquired those manners and habits of thought which give to their class on shore the useful ascendency it has acquired in such matters. That this is a mistake, I think all who have had an opportunity of observing the fact will cheerfullly testify; nor can there be, I suppose, even on land, a more striking difference between the manners of any two classes than I have often witnessed between two different midshipmen's berths, in one of which there existed this admixture of rank, and in the other none. Besides which, it must be recollected, that the young men of family, like all the other officers in the service, visit their friends from time to time: so that, even in the earliest stages of the profession, the utility of their presence is considerable. Its influence, however, gradually increases as they advance in station, and at every step they impart more and more of that tone to manners, which, while they acquire it themselves as it were instinctively, or, as some one has well expressed it, by right of blood, they communicate, by insensible degrees, to their companions, and without the slightest presumption.

The sailors, who, from being very quick-sighted to the merits and faults of their officers, form critics of great correctness, understand at once the distinction between a well-bred or high-caste officer, and one who, not having been born in a class where good manners are an essential characteristic, has not contrived to adopt them from others. A ship's company like, above all things, to be commanded by gentlemen; while there is nothing they so much hate or despise in an officer as that coarseness of thought and behaviour which marks their own class.

My object in this discussion will, however, be greatly mistaken, if it be supposed that to this cause alone I ascribe all the high and chivalrous spirit which belongs to the Navy, and which has contributed to give it a peculiar character, both afloat and ashore, for so great a period of time. The introduction of the members of the aristocracy, their sons, or their connexions, these 'sprigs of nobility,' as we used good-humouredly to call them in the midshipmen's berth, does unquestionably lend a very useful hand to purify the general style of thought and action in the Navy: but, after all, this is only one of a great many maintaining powers which are brought into constant play by the nature of the profession. To these other causes I may, perhaps, have occasion to refer more distinctly at some future time; meanwhile, I must advert, in passing, to the agreeable and useful circumstance of naval officers on foreign stations being admitted, at once, and quite as a matter of course, to the best society of all the places at which they happen to touch when serving abroad. There is no exception to this rule; and as the same principles regulate good manners all over the world, with those slight modifications in practice which men employed in real business readily catch up, naval officers have ample means of improving such opportunities, not as express matters of study, but insensibly, and in the common course of their daily occupations.

I must now return, however, to a topic which, shortly after coming to England, engrossed all my thoughts. I mean the most important of all promotions, that from midshipman to lieutenant.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE FIRST STEP ON THE LADDER OF PROMOTION.

HAVING no particular pretensions on aristocratical, or, indeed, on any other grounds, I saw no hope of advancement, except by getting on the list of some Admiral on a foreign station. I therefore put in motion every engine I could think of to accomplish this purpose, but with so little expectation of immediate promotion, that I

would most cheerfully have bargained for securing that grand object in two or three years after passing for lieutenant. I was, however, fortunate enough to secure it much sooner.

Let a young fellow be ever so well informed, or ever so well prepared, or ever so confident in himself beforehand, I defy him to face a set of examiners who are to pronounce on his qualifications, without a certain allowance of doubt and apprehension. This state of mind, in the fashionable language of the cockpit, is defined by the term 'making buttons.' I presume the phrase comes from that sort of convulsive twitching and twirling of the culprit's fingers, applied to the buttons of his waistcoat and trousers, by which you may at any time recognise a son of Neptune involved in a scrape. Be the etymology what it may, I can answer for there being a glorious manufactory of these articles at Somerset House, on the 1st of June, 1808, the awful passing-day. There could not be fewer, I think, than twenty or thirty midshipmen assembled there, for the purpose of undergoing their trials, or examinations, before the commissioners; and I certainly never beheld anxiety more strongly expressed than upon this occasion. The floor of the great lobby or hall was studded over with variously-occupied groups of wretched probationers and their anxious friends; some being huddled up in a corner, with Hamilton Moore's Complete Navigator on their knees, drilling and re-drilling into their dull memories, and still duller intellects, the simplest rules of navigation; while others, aiming at higher things, strove to master the complicated cases of that most useless of all problems, the Double Altitudes; or sought to reach the sublime doctrines of Lunar Observations. I heard more than one poor fellow bitterly denouncing his own confounded negligence, as he called it, by which he had been prevented from learning anything till within a month of these fearful trials; and not a few were reproaching the government, with a great show of reason it must be confessed, for not providing every ship in the Navy with a schoolmaster.

"How on earth," I heard one of these exclaim, "could I possibly have learned all these 'crabbed rules by mere instinct, as a blind puppy is taught to swim? I am not a dog (though I have been treated pretty much like one), and now I dare say I shall be turned back, because I am not a star-gazer or a moon-scraper, a lunarian forsooth! I wish the commissioners would let me off with this cursed navigation, and try to puzzle me with their seamanship. I think I could meet the old bucks there!"

I know not whether it may be necessary to explain that the word seamanship refers, with us, exclusively to the rigging, steering, sailing, anchoring, and so on, of vessels; while navigation is a term applied, technically, to that branch of the profession which relates to the determination of the ship's place, and deciding what is the proper course to be steered in order to reach a given port.

These have long been, and still are, the only two grand divisions into which an officer's duties are divided in treatises upon nautical subjects. But there is a third branch, at least of equal importance to the well-being of every ship that swims, and of the Royal Navy in particular, which is hardly ever alluded to, and never, as far as I know, made to form any part of these examinations; I mean the science of discipline. It has often occurred to me, indeed, that one-third part of the time spent in examining a young man's qualifications, before he is declared eligible to hold a commission in the service, would be well bestowed in ascertaining whether or not he had any acquaintance with that important department of his duty which relates to the management of the people under him, and of his obligations to those by whom he is commanded. At the time I speak of, and I suspect it is no better now, all this was left pretty much to chance; so that officers had to pick up what knowledge they could of discipline as they best might.

There seems no good reason for this great omission in naval education; and there can be little doubt, I think, that the state of ignorance of most young officers on this topic is a fertile cause of misunderstandings between them and their superiors, and also leads to many punishments on the part of the seamen, which might be prevented, if their superiors were duly instructed in the difficult and complicated art alluded to. It is very true, that there are many intricacies and refinements in discipline which can be taught by experience only; but surely this is no reason why those portions which can be so imparted should be neglected so completely as they are at present. Hardly a day of his life passes during which an officer has not to investigate complaints; and yet how very few young men can be at all aware of the most elementary principles of the law of evidence? How indistinctly is the necessity of patience and self-command impressed upon their minds? And how often are they led insensibly to make themselves parties instead of judges?

The miserable mids I spoke of, who were met together on the passing-day at Somerset House, though called in, one by one, to be examined in seamanship and navigation, were summoned up stairs two at a time; one poor caitiff being left outside, while the other was ushered by the doorkeeper into the awful presence of the examiners. Human ingenuity could not invent a more perfect imitation of purgatory than the predicament of the expectant, button-making reefer outside. The one who was called in had his part to play, well or ill, according to his capacity and attainments, and being fairly brought up to the scratch, as it is called, he knew the extent of his antagonist's arm, and was naturally roused to make the best fight he could. But the poor devil without, uncertain which of a hundred and fifty questions were to be asked him, kept scourging up his memory to retain the whole set of answers contained in the 'Epitome of Navigation.' His imagination, too, being under no sort of guidance, he naturally tormented himself by embodying, in his fanciful conception of the examining commissioners, every stern and unrelenting quality which his experience of Tartars (as nautical martinets are called) had furnished him with opportunities of smarting under.

Although we assembled at ten in the morning, it was past three before it came to my turn to be summoned. I had felt rather confident on first entering the scene, but my presumption gradually evaporated as the hours rolled by; till I became infected, in the course of the day, with the general fidget. My poor father, who was with me all the

time, became more and more anxious as he beheld the long visages of several rejected candidates, and heard them, on being successively turned down stairs, ejaculating anathemas against the service, the passing-officers, the country, and everything but their own pig-headed stupidity—the sole cause of their discomfiture!

I had brought a letter with me, written by a friendly old Admiral, addressed to one of the passing-captains, and given me the day before, with directions to send it up on going to Somerset House in the morning. The letter being sealed, I knew not whether it were merely introductory, or if it contained any request in my favour. But as I thought I could get through my examination without extra favour or assistance from any one, I resolved to break the Admiral's orders, and keep the letter till all was over. In the course of the day, however, as the plot thickened, I half repented of my magnanimity, and began to consider it as a duty I owed to the Admiral not to trifle with his directions. Still, after reflection, I resolved to go through with it; and my turn came at last, with the introductory epistle still in my pocket.

A heavy-looking youth, whom I had seen poring over his book all the morning, and asking questions of every acquaintance in the lobby, to their great annoyance, was called up along with me. His name stood before mine on the list, and consequently he was ushered into the presence of the commissioners first, while I was left alone in the passage or space between the wall and the circular railing at the top of the western stair—a spot I never pass, even to this hour, without feeling my flesh creep.

Most of the other midshipmen had been kept in about a quarter of an hour, or so; but my unhappy 'pendant' did not make his appearance till nearly twice that interval had elapsed; and when at last he did show his countenance, it was so inordinately elongated, that I hardly recognised him.

"Well, my boy!" I eagerly asked, "how did you get on? Are they as sharp as they tell us? What did they ask you?"

"You'll soon find that out—I have not passed," was all the reply I could get from him. He had no sooner spoken, than the words "Mr. Hall!" were bawled out by the messenger. I was so completely startled by the sound, that I could not move, while the staircase appeared to spin round; in fact, I could distinguish nothing, and forgot where I was.

"Mr. Basil Hall!!" again vociferated the man, in tones which fell on my ear like a thunderbolt, though it was but the ordinary voice of the doorkeeper. I almost think I could now select the fellow out of a thousand, at the distance of two-and-twenty years, by his awful voice alone!

On I marched, in a sort of bewilderment, into a small room, lighted by a single window, with three very good-natured-looking persons seated at a table covered with black leather. I forget exactly if they asked me to sit down. I think they did. At all events, the tone in which they spoke, and their manner altogether, were so different from what I had conjured up during my residence in the midshipman's purgatory at the top of the stairs, that I felt quite re-assured before the first question was put.

"Now, Mr. Hall," said one of the officers, "we have sent out that young gentleman you met at the door just now, merely to refresh his memory; and we shall begin by asking you the very same question which has puzzled him for the last quarter of an hour.

"He had split his main-topsail, unbent what was not blown away of the old one, and succeeded, with some little trouble, in getting the new sail nearly into the top; but, for the life of him, he could not get it over the top-rail. What had he omitted, do you suppose?"

"It is likely," I answered, "that if he made use of the topsail haulyards, he neglected to take up the tie."

I saw them nod to one another; and it gave me ample confidence for what was likely to follow, when I found they had hesitated for one moment about turning back such a noodle as my predecessor must of course have been, who could have bungled a petty job like this. In fact, the examination, instead of turning out, as I had anticipated, an over-strict one, proved so ridiculously easy, that I was rather provoked at its simplicity, and almost felt unfairly dealt with, for being denied an opportunity of displaying my prodigious stock of well-crammed knowledge.

I have much pleasure in stating, that the examinations now-a-days are infinitely more rigid than they were; and I have every reason to believe, that this change, so far from being unpopular with the better class of midshipmen, is universally approved of by young men of spirit, and has contributed essentially to introduce a much better system of preparation.

As soon as it was announced to me that I had passed, I produced my letter of introduction; upon which the gentleman to whom it was addressed exclaimed,

"Hillo! young fellow, why did you not send this up to me, as you were desired, in the morning? I have a great mind to turn you back for showing that you don't know how to obey orders! There, read it yourself."

The letter ran thus:

"My dear ——. As the bearer of this, Mr. Hall, who is to be examined to-morrow, will be accompanied by his father, Sir James Hall, who wishes, on account of business, to get away early, I shall be glad if you can take him soon, in order that he may be enabled to go at once. Yours, &c."

On my saying I had fancied it might contain some request to ease me off gently, he cried, "And so you fancy we old cocks job into one another's hands in that way, do you? However, never mind, we have passed you; and, for all your suspicions, we shall not reverse our decree. So, as you go along, send your friend in again, to see what chance there is for his main-topsail, which has been banging about between heaven and earth all this time."

I scampered down stairs like a shot, and, rejoining my party, never dreamed of my companion with his double allowance of purgatory.

A long time afterwards, I met one of my passing-captains, and asked him what they had done with the youth in question. "That," said he, "is a very sore subject, and has cost me some remorse. The truth is, we ought to have turned him back; but we agreed to pass him, in consi-

deration of his knowledge of navigation, and because, upon the whole, he appeared really not deficient in ability. Some months after the time we are speaking of," continued the officer, "I saw his name in the newspapers amongst the list of promotions, and, shortly afterwards, his appointment as lieutenant to a sloop of war. I confess I did not feel quite easy, and still less so, when, in the course of the season, I read an account of this vessel's shipwreck, in which all hands perished; nor have I ever been able to free myself from the idea, that possibly the loss might have taken place during this very young man's watch, and consequently that his incapacity may have sacrificed one of his Majesty's ships and her whole crew. I have no reason for knowing that it was so; only let me recommend you, if ever you attain to my rank, and are called upon to examine young gentlemen, not to execute the trust as lightly as—to my shame be it said—I did on that day."

This mighty affair over, I had next to set about tormenting my friends to get me promoted. I had no acquaintance with any of the men in power; and although my father was in Parliament, he had kept so much aloof from both parties, that he could reckon upon the assistance of neither. It certainly was not his intention to remain for ever in this intermediate state; but having only recently entered the House, he thought it right to take time to study the bearings of the different parties before he made his election between them.

It will naturally be supposed that I urged him to decide this matter in the most orthodox way; but I had made no great progress in sapping his neutrality, when accident, I may almost call it, settled the point as far as I was concerned, and sent me spanking off to sea again, with an elastic bound of spirits which kept me in motion for the next dozen of years.

Most people will recollect, that in the session of 1807-8 a violent attack was made in Parliament upon the Marquess Wellesley's administration as Governor-general of India. The inquiry, as everybody now knows, had only the effect of raising that nobleman's renown as a statesman. But at the period I speak of, his friends in the House of Commons were a good deal pressed; and the support of any independent member was, of course, extremely valuable, but still more so, if that support arose exclusively out of a thorough knowledge of the subject.

I forget exactly from what cause my father had been originally led to direct his attention to Indian affairs; but I know that he studied with great care the charge against Lord Wellesley, which related to his lordship's management of the Carnatic territory. He was induced, if I am not mistaken, to take up this particular branch of the subject from seeing it so confidently handled by another member, who, by his personal opportunities, must be thought to have learned all its details. At least, I remember his coming home one evening from the House, and expressing to me his great admiration of the way in which the whole of these Eastern questions were treated.

"I was much interested to-night," he remarked, "with the resolute manner in which this topic was taken up by Sir Arthur Wellesley, brother to the late Governor-general. He stood forward on the floor of the House, demanded investigation, and defied all the attacks against his relative, with such an unusual degree of confidence, as went far to satisfy me that everything must be right in that quarter. Indeed," he added, "I have seldom seen any thing more vigorous or manly, in all respects, than Sir Arthur's challenge; and I should feel it a sort of duty, were it on this ground alone, to go to the bottom of the affair, whatever time or labour it may cost me."

To work he set, accordingly, with renewed vigour, to master the complicated point at issue; and by devoting himself exclusively to the subject, he made himself minutely acquainted with every paper and every tittle of evidence that had been produced on the question—a task which, probably, very few other members, totally unconnected with the parties, could have found either leisure or perseverance for.

Upon various occasions, during the debates which ensued, my father showed in the House that he not only comprehended the matter thoroughly, but that he fully approved of the Marquess Wellesley's conduct. This was the more agreeable to that nobleman's family, as it came from a person entirely independent of either side, and evidently speaking from the conviction engrafted on his mind by a minute acquaintance with the details. It will easily be understood, also, that this rare degree of familiarity with so difficult and distant a topic brought him into acquaintance with the different friends of the nobleman whose conduct was under investigation. Several of these gentlemen requested to be introduced to him, in order to thank their new ally for his unexpected support.

My grand anxiety, on hearing all this, naturally was, to ascertain if the Secretary of the Admiralty, Mr. Wellesley Pole (now Lord Maryborough), was of this number of grateful persons; and upon learning that he was, I begged my father to lose no time in introducing me to him. This ceremony was accordingly gone through, upon which occasion the secretary was most affable. He took down my name, asked where I had served, and wished to know if I were ready to go afloat again. I satisfied him on these points by putting, as it is called, my best foot foremost. Nothing further passed between us at that time.

Within a few days of this interview, however, a most portentous-looking official packet was delivered at the lodgings in which we resided. It was addressed to my father, who, unfortunately, had just set off upon business to the city. I saw by the superscription that the despatch was from the Admiralty; and as I, of course, conjectured it must relate to myself, I felt vehemently tempted to break the seal. Had it been from any other office than the stern head-quarters of our stern profession, the fountain-head of strict discipline, I might possibly have trespassed. As it was, I dared not venture to open it, but set off in the freshest-looking coach I could discover on the stand; and, offering the coachman double fare, cantered away to the city with my precious budget. The glorious vision of a real parchment commission, and the brilliant celebrity of seeing my name in print in the next month's Navy List, haunted my imagination as a degree of happiness almost too great to be borne. I thrust my head out of the hackney-coach window every three minutes, to

urge the wondering driver to still faster speed. In rumbling along Fleet-street, we found the passage, as usual, blocked up. I could have soused the whole pile of carriages and drays into the bottomless pit, for their barbarous interruption!

At length we reached the house of a gentleman with whom I knew my father had made an appointment; and I believe that, antecedent to the days when cabs were created, no regular Jarvie ever made the journey in so short a time. I leaped out of the vehicle, thundered at the door, and tugged at the bell, to the prodigious indignation of the wondering footman, who, however, had his full revenge for my violence in the forlorn drooping of my visage, as he said, in answer to my eager inquiries,

"Sir James has left this a full quarter of an hour ago, or it may be twenty minutes, sir. You'll hardly catch him, sir," said the rascal, as he glanced his eye at the steaming horses, lathered with foam from tail to nostril.

"Take me back again!" I exclaimed, in despair, to the driver; and, at the word, away we jingled once more to the westward.

My father, in the interval, had called at the lodgings, but had been obliged to go out a second time. As he felt uncertain when he might return, he left word for me to place the Admiralty packet on his table. I remained at home for several hours, half-dead with impatience to know whether I was really and truly a commissioned officer in his Majesty's service, or whether I remained still Mr. Nobody, a mere zero in the profession, employed to make up a sum total, but not even the fraction of a unit. At last, finding I could stand it no longer, I set out to try what reading the evening papers in Hatchett's coffee-house would do. The whole set were demolished, advertisements inclusive, without my understanding one word of them. I then ordered dinner, and sat in grim repose, till at last the door opened, and in walked my father, with the Admiralty letter open in one hand, and a note in the other. There was no gathering from the expression of his countenance what was the news; but when he put into my hands the following line, I gave such a spring and such a shout, that the waiters fell back in amaze upon the bar, doubtless thinking the young gentleman, who had previously seemed so uneasy in his mind, was now fairly cracked. The precious billet ran thus:—

"Mr. Wellesley Pole presents his compliments to Sir James Hall, and is happy to have it in his power to enclose his son's commission as lieutenant of the Invincible."

The White Horse Cellar, in all its vicissitudes of company, never entertained two happier persons. As for me, I may safely say that this must ever remain one of the brightest hours of my existence, come what may. I felt that as I had now got my foot fairly planted on the first step of the ladder, it remained with myself to get to the top. With all the confidence therefore, and some tolerable share of the presumption, of youth, health, and spirits, I never dreamed of distrusting the result.

But I can recollect with satisfaction, that, even at that moment of high exultation, I was fully aware of the pressing sort of obligation which this early advancement imposed upon me to work hard. I felt bound, not only in gratitude to the gentleman who unsolicited had raised me into such a new world of bright promise, but, in a tenfold degree, became riveted to the service of which I was now an accredited member. Although Lord Maryborough will, no doubt, have forgotten long ago all about this affair, I trust he will believe that the young mid whom he so kindly promoted has never for one instant ceased to feel, or failed to acknowledge, to whose well-timed protection he owes this first and most important turn in the wheel of his fortunes.

It is right to bear in mind, that however much services and merit, whether these consist of actual deeds, or only of talents and knowledge, may furnish claims upon public patronage at more advanced stages of the profession, these recommendations can scarcely ever be used, even in the imagination of the most Utopian patriot, as guides in regulating the general run of promotions from midshipman to lieutenant. At that early age, the course of events will very rarely have furnished opportunities enough for the development of abilities, or of any of those other attributes in a naval officer, by which alone men in whose hands the distribution of patronage is vested could be able to regulate promotion according to what is called strict justice. In practice, accordingly, for one midshipman that is made a lieutenant for real services, there may be, for aught I know, five hundred advanced from sheer favour.

In some cases, the Admiralty are the patrons, in others the admirals in command of foreign stations, and in some a dash of parliamentary influence, like that to which I stand mainly indebted, is the moving cause. But to whichever of these the promotion be due, it seems obvious that, precisely in proportion to the absence of what are called claims for past services, the load of obligation for the future is increased upon the shoulders of those who are thus distinguished before their companions. I think, also, I am correct in stating, that in the great majority of cases the binding nature of this obligation is duly felt by the parties themselves; chiefly, perhaps, in consequence of the gentlemanlike spirit which, from causes to be investigated presently, pervades all ranks in the Navy. Upon the whole, therefore, I have little doubt that the amount of exertion heartily employed in the public service is greater under the present system than it could be rendered under any other distribution of patronage bearing on the earlier stages of the profession. It will be quite time enough when we come to the more advanced ranks to discuss the modifications which are made, and of others which some people think ought to be made, in the rules that regulate promotions to those higher offices of the Navy.

I need scarcely add, that I allowed none of these philosophical or political refinements to disturb my enjoyment in the possession of my first commission. It is true I felt the urgent necessity of sparing no pains to justify what had already been done for me, and to make out, by the event, that the Secretary of the Admiralty, with the characteristic penetration of his family, had only given me credit in advance for services which he reckoned upon being paid to the public, but which, without this well-timed lift, might have lain for ever beyond my reach. To have things put on

such terms was, of course, exactly what I wished. I desired nothing but opportunities; and before I slept that night had framed many a wise resolution, and erected many a goodly castle in the air, as to the fittest method of securing the next step; never doubting that as soon as I was eligible to be made a commander, that is to say, in a couple of years more, some other equally friendly, equally powerful, and equally discerning patron would be found to calculate, in like manner, upon the probable good to the country by my promotion! The result turned out widely different, however, as will be seen in the sequel; for it cost me six very hard, fagging years of tough work, over many a land and sea,

"In every clime the sun's bright circle warms,"

before I attained the stage I then thought, perhaps naturally enough, a great deal more accessible than it proved.

CHAPTER XXII.

HOW TO EFFECT AN EXCHANGE.

After the first burst of rejoicing was over, at this extraordinary good fortune, I began to disquiet myself, and not in vain, about my appointment, wishing that, instead of being named to a line-of-battle ship, I had been ordered to join some more active vessel, a frigate for instance. It may be said, that nothing could well be more unreasonable than this discontent, and that I ought rather quietly and thankfully to have taken the great good which had fallen to my lot, than gone on worrying my friends and myself with fresh anxieties. But the very nature of our business seems almost to require that a naval officer should never rest satisfied with anything. It would, of course, be nonsense to deny that they should be ready to obey every order with cheerfulness and alacrity; but still it is quite consistent with this submission, that they should be eternally and earnestly bent on getting into higher and better situations for the exercise of such qualifications as they fancy themselves to possess.

After a good deal of ruminating and plotting, I resolved to attack, in person, that particular lord of the Admiralty whose department it was to regulate the appointment of lieutenants. The actual promotion of officers, I may mention, is one thing; their distribution in the different ships another. In whose hands the first and grandest power of all resides, that of promotion, I shall not say, for many reasons; one of which is, that I really do not know. Even, however, were I admitted to a knowledge of such an official secret, I hardly think I could venture to divulge it. 'Shore-going people,' as we used in the cockpit to style all the rest of the world, have no means of forming any just conception of the mysterious sort of dread with which a naval officer enters the solemn portico of the Admiralty. Whether or not there be any far-advanced stage of the profession (when fortune has showered her stars and garters upon an officer in high professional command, or in high political station), at which this immeasurable awe wears off, I cannot tell; but, as far as I have yet observed, I have seldom seen one, even of the most favoured sons of Neptune, who, on entering the Admiralty, did not look grave as he passed that most attentive of porters, Mr. Nutland, or who on coming out again did not look still graver.

I know not what I might do now, but in those early days it would, in sea language, have required a good strong purchase to have induced me to apply actually in the Admiralty to one of the powerful demi-gods who rule there, within three days of my first promotion, and to beg I might be removed from a line-of-battle ship to a frigate. This change was what my whole heart was set upon, yet nothing could be more unreasonable than to expect such a thing; unless, therefore, it were managed in some roundabout way, it was obvious I should get nothing but a rap over the knuckles for my pains. I accordingly flatter myself that I set about this affair, which then appeared to me the most important thing in the world, with some discretion. At all events, my efforts were crowned with success.

I had little or no personal acquaintance with the officer whom it was my object to move upon this occasion, or, to speak correctly, he had no knowledge of me. I knew him well enough as one of the best officers in the Navy, and had heard him described as an extremely good-natured and hospitable man. I had likewise often observed that people are generally in the best humour, and most disposed to do kind things, about breakfast-time, after their bodies and minds have had rest, and before the cares of the new day have ruffled their thoughts. So I hired a hack one morning, not long after my promotion to lieutenant, and rode out to Camberwell, to breakfast with this said lord of the Admiralty. I carried with me a letter of introduction from a person who was intimately acquainted with him, which set forth that the bearer, before joining his ship, felt anxious to have the advantage of an acquaintance at head-quarters, who might be useful to him in the event of any difficulty arising, and so on.

I took care to arrive some ten minutes previous to the breakfast hour, that by sending my credentials before me, I might appear less like an intruder. Yet a sly kind of expression on the veteran's countenance implied a suspicion of some design being intended upon his patronage beyond the limits of his tea and toast, which by this time stood smoking away in great style on the table. Possibly, however, this was merely the suggestion of my own evil conscience; for he let slip nothing which gave me the smallest reason to suppose he dived into my thoughts. I felt more and more embarrassed as the meal went on, for it seemed as if I should have no opportunity of pressing my suit. When we rose, he said "Well, young officer, will you ride into town with me?" which words threw me into such a fidget, that I could verily have counted time by the sound of my pulse.

Of course I accepted a proposal, which promised some opening for popping the question, with which my breast, indeed, was as full as ever was that of a sighing swain on the look-out for an opportunity to win the favour of his mistress. Why all this anxiety should have existed, I know not, or, at all events, I should despair of explaining the reason to any one who has not served six years as a mid-

shipman, and become acquainted with the measureless difference which lies between a mighty lord of the Admiralty and a poor lieutenant of only a few days' standing!

In spite of this huge interval between us, we jogged on very agreeably towards Charing-cross. But my companion gave me no opening to introduce the topic which was uppermost in my thoughts; and when he began a *long* story about some of his own adventures at sea, my heart sunk within me. I listened, however, to what he said with such a prodigious degree of attention, that although I heard all the words, not a particle of the sense entered my head. My thoughts, in fact, were far away; and I could fix them upon nothing but frigates, and transfers from ship to ship, till I quite forgot where I was, or in whose company I was travelling. I suppose my companion detected, by my over-acted attention, what was passing in my mind; for he suddenly changed his subject, and, turning to me, said,

"Now, Mr. Lieutenant, I suppose some day you will get tired of your ship, and be wanting to effect an exchange?"

The certainty that the experienced officer had read the whole of my story, while I was pretending to listen to his, flashed upon me at once, and I felt that I was blushing down to my boots at having been so caught. I was at first so confused that I said nothing; and he continued:

"Should such a case arise, apply to me, and I'll see what can be done. But, I suppose," added he, "this can hardly be the case yet, as you are not a very old officer, and have not joined your first ship?"

By this time I had rallied; and, being resolved not to lose so good a chance, I boarded my friend in a trice.

"I am ready, sir, and willing to serve in any ship or vessel the Admiralty are pleased to put me into; and there is nothing I desire so much as to go afloat, and to be employed as actively as possible. But I should be glad, sir, to be in a frigate instead of a 74, if I could, as more likely to be in the way of service; and I should take it as very kind, sir, if you would transfer me now to some ship of that class."

"It is out of the question! quite out of the question!" he cried; "and really," he added, "I must do the rising generation of officers the justice to say, that modesty is not a quality that encumbers them; and you Scotchmen, I observe, in particular, are not likely to lose any good thing for want of asking for it."

"It is but little," I ventured to retort, "that I know of Scotland, sir; I have been at sea now six years and more, in which time I have been at home only twelve days!"

"Ho! ho! my young fellow," he exclaimed; "so you are getting up a grievance, are you, to work my compassion? This is a claim, is it?"

"No, sir; only I thought it as well to mention the circumstance, in the hope that if you should not be able to appoint me to a frigate, you might perhaps grant me the lesser favour of a fortnight or three weeks' run to see my friends. But I would much rather join a frigate, sir, as I consider the sea my home, and desire no other."

This shot was aimed to hit the old officer between wind and water; and it took effect, I could see, just at the proper angle. Whether he thought it got up to please him, or that he considered the sentiment deserving of encouragement, I know not; but he replied, with more earnestness than he had yet shown—

"Stick to that principle, my young friend; and always recollect, that no officer has any business on shore until he has reached the rank of post-captain, nor even then if by any means he can employ himself usefully afloat. In the meanwhile I shall take you at your word, and appoint you to the first vacancy in a frigate of which I have the nomination; but, mind, don't let me see any letters from you asking for leave of absence. Think of your ship, and your duty alone, and let home take care of itself. But here is the Admiralty gate, so I must bid you good-bye; and if you attend properly to what I have just said, you will be sure to get on."

I certainly never did forget these few but judicious words; and many a time and oft, in subsequent years, when sorely pressed by temptations to depart a little from their letter or spirit, the friendly caution has come in aid of resolutions of self-denial all but over-mastered. This generous little morsel of encouragement, too, at the end of the speech, has often comforted me amidst very bitter disappointments, and helped to reanimate hopes well-nigh extinguished. As the remark, however, was made very possibly as a mere piece of civility, the officer himself, now an old Admiral, would be surprised, I dare say, were he to learn how materially what he then said has influenced all my professional life from that hour to this.

Such maxims are of little or no avail unless they happen to fall in with the sentiments of the party to whom they are addressed at the moment; but, on the other hand, it will often happen, that where there exists already a disposition to act well, without any precise rule to give that impulse a right direction, our resolutions evaporate in words. I shall be very happy, therefore, if the foregoing anecdote, and what follows, shall meet the eye of any young person similarly circumstanced with myself, and who may be disposed, in like manner, to lay its instruction to heart, and wear it like an amulet to charm away those ugly blue devils, which, let him be ever so fortunate, will certainly be found to torment him, at some turn or other, in the rough path of his uncertain profession.

It so happened, as I learned afterwards, that within an hour after the conversation above related, a young lieutenant, not much my senior in rank, called at the Admiralty, to speak to my Camberwell patron pretty nearly on the same subject. He happened, however, not to take exactly the same view of things I had done; and the consequences of this distinction were of some importance to him and to me. He had recently been appointed, it seemed, lieutenant of a frigate; and, like me, had been desirous of going home for a short while. But this wish not being encouraged, he had relinquished it until, more pressing domestic matters having occurred to render his presence at home necessary, he went again to the Admiralty, and, as my good luck would have it, on the very morning I had the interview, of which the details have been given above.

This young man thought, and perhaps with

some reason, that as the frigate to which he had been appointed was in dock, and likely to remain there for several months, his presence could not be absolutely necessary. But his, or rather my friend, the old officer, thought otherwise; for when the lieutenant signified his desire to go home, he was answered that he certainly might go, if he chose to give up his appointment in the mean time, with the chance of being named to another frigate at the end of a few months.

"This, however," said the official authority, "must be entirely your own act and deed; for I don't like ships to be lying without officers, and shall put some one in your place instantly; while you must incur the risk, when your leave expires, of not getting on board so fine a ship as the frigate you now belong to."

These things being understood, the officer gave up his ship, and into the vacancy thus made, as might be supposed, my name was immediately dropped; so that before night I had my commission for His Majesty's ship Endymion, one of the finest, if not the very finest frigate then in His Majesty's service. Thus all parties were satisfied. The appointing authority kept to his rule of not leaving ships without officers; the lieutenant, whose place I fell into, had his run home; and I obtained the object I had all my life so anxiously desired.

Some months afterwards, I received a visit from an old friend and messmate, then lieutenant of another frigate which anchored alongside of us. In the course of conversation, I learned that he had been the very person who made way so opportunely for me. As there is almost as much difference between ships afloat as there is between houses on shore, it will be easily understood that the chances were against my friend's gaining by the exchange he had made. He expressed his regret with much bitterness of spirit, vowing that in future he would take precious good care how he let go such a chance as he saw me profiting by.

Indeed, I believe no man or boy ever enjoyed himself more entirely than I did upon the occasion of my appointment to the Endymion. After what had passed in front of the Admiralty gate between one of its most potent lords and myself, I could not, of course, dream for an instant of asking leave to go home. In fact, all my thoughts and wishes, asleep or awake, ran so entirely upon frigates, that I badgered the tailors' lives out till my new coat was made, after which I set off to take up my commission at Chatham, went on board, reported myself to the senior lieutenant, and then, but not till then, felt myself in good faith an officer at last!

The Endymion, which I find described in one of my glowing epistles of that period, as being "divinely beautiful," was snug enough in dock; and I regretted much to hear that she was likely to remain there, to complete her repairs, for two or three months at least. She had been employed for several years very actively in the Mediterranean; and, amongst other rubs, had got well peppered in passing the Dardanelles. Upon that memorable occasion, several of those huge granite shot used by the Turks struck her, killing and wounding many of her people. One of these stones had stuck fast in her side, and weighed upwards of seven hundred pounds.

The object of taking a ship into a dry dock, as it is called, is to have the means of examining and repairing those parts which, when she is afloat, lie under water. The copper, for example, which is generally stripped off, is replaced by newly-rolled sheets; and the keel, cut-water, stern-post, and rudder minutely overhauled. Within the ship, too, all sorts of repairs are carried on. The decks may require ripping up or caulking, and most of the bulkheads need examination. In short, a stranger would almost fancy the dock-yard artificers were tearing the poor ship to pieces instead of refitting her.

Of course, when matters come to this extremity, and hundreds of workmen are hammering and sawing away in every corner, it is impossible the officers and crew can live in the midst of the noise and confusion; nor, if they could, would it be easy to keep them out of the way of the workmen. At foreign places, indeed, they are obliged to remain on board, or even at home, when the demands of the service are urgent. But as the presence of the crew is always troublesome to the workmen, and unspeakably disagreeable to all the parties concerned, the usual practice, when a ship requires extensive repairs, is to move the officers and ship's company into what is called a hulk. This is a sort of floating house, lying in the harbour, alongside which the ship is lashed. Sometimes, however, she is taken, as the Endymion was, into dock; in which case her crew remain on board the hulk, and hold communication with their ship by means of boats.

These temporary abodes are generally old superannuated ships, moored, head and stern, by strong chains in the middle of the stream, and fitted up comfortably enough for the residence of the crews of men-of-war under repair. The word hulk naturally recalls the unpleasant idea of a convict-ship; and, in fact, there is not in appearance any great difference between the two, only we have not iron bars placed across our ports and cabin-windows; though we do look pretty nearly as black and prison-like as any floating jail amongst them. We passed our time, however, very agreeably for more than three months, in the old Brakel, a Dutch ship taken in 1796. But as our own frigate was all this time in the hands of the dock-yard, we, the officers, who alone remained, had but few duties to attend to. The sailors and marines had all been discharged from the frigate before I joined her.

For all the purposes of His Majesty's service, therefore, I, for my part, might certainly have been fully as well employed at home in scraping an acquaintance with my nearest relations, of whom I had seen little or nothing for so many years, as in co-operating with my shipmates in getting up amusements at Chatham. The particular terms upon which I had received my appointment, however, made it quite impossible for me to ask leave of absence; and long before such a chance occurred again, death and sickness, alas! had done their work in thinning the circle I was not allowed to join, at the only period I could have visited Scotland without loss of professional time.

But I was vastly too happy with my newly-acquired rank in the world to let this or anything else discompose me; and I set to work upon half-a-dozen different pursuits at once, from thinking

that such an opportunity of leisure might not soon return. Accordingly, the second lieutenant and myself, being desirous of improving ourselves in modern languages, and not readily finding a French teacher at Chatham, engaged a gentleman to come from London to live with us, in order, as we said, to combine rigorous study with familiar intercourse. This answered pretty well; and what with an elementary course of mathematics, an active correspondence with a scientific friend on geology and linear perspective, an hour or two every day in drawing, as many in riding, to say nothing of the numerous dinner-parties, and pleasant evenings spent in flirting and dancing with the belles of the dock-yard and parts adjacent, we managed to let off some portion of the high pressure of animal spirits, which all this unexpected good fortune had given birth to.

The first thing, I well remember, which broke across this whirl of idleness, (for, in fact, it was little more, though dignified with the name of study,) was the account published on the 1st of September, 1808, of "Lieutenant-General Sir Arthur Wellesley's successes at Vimeira over the army in Portugal, on the 17th and 21st of August." When we contrasted our own useless, languid situation, as far as public action was concerned, with the hard work to which the sister service was exposed, we became exceedingly impatient to be in the midst of the fray; and naturally participating in the furious, but, as it now appears, the ill-founded outcry, raised immediately afterwards, all over the country, against the Convention of Cintra, we rejoiced to find that we should ere long be at sea. The ship was no sooner warped out of dock than we were supplied with several hundred seamen and marines, and the equipment went on like magic. The language-master disappeared, Euclid was put on the shelf; and the young ladies of Chatham and Rochester 'sighed, and looked, in vain,' for those faithless beaux, who, but a week before, they had some reason to imagine were far more devoted to the service of their bright eyes than that of His Majesty!

In the beginning of October, we learned, for the first time, that the coast of Spain was our destination; a piece of news that fell in admirably with the tone of our spirits, vehemently roused, as they of course were at that strange juncture, by the sudden rise of the Spaniards against the French in the Peninsula. We soon got ready for sea; and on the 17th of October, 1808, started from our moorings in the Medway. Before the month was ended, we sailed from Spithead for Corunna, with upwards of two hundred transports, containing troops for Sir John Moore's army. In three weeks we reached our port with the greater number of our flock; and here a totally new scene opened upon us.

CHAPTER XXIII.

FIRST GLIMPSE OF SPAIN.

Of all European countries, Spain is probably that which, to English eyes at least, has the most decidedly foreign aspect; and, consequently, is the one which least disappoints a traveller's expectation when he first visits it. Italy, no doubt, is more fertile in subjects of enduring interest, and will bear minute examination better; but I speak at this moment chiefly of the romantic as well as historical, and in some respects classical, associations which engage our feelings towards Spain. These are of so varied and singular a nature in themselves, and are so curiously mingled together in our thoughts, that the resulting impression, even on the dullest minds, is not a little dazzling; while upon those gifted with any fancy at all, it is in the highest degree inspiring.

It matters little whether we cast our eyes far back into its history, or take a nearer glance, or whether we dive into the middle periods. The contest of the Romans under Pompey with Sertorius and the guerillas of those early days, marks how eminently well the Peninsula is adapted for that species of warfare, which, in later times, after many centuries of severe fighting, thrust out the Moors, and, more recently, cut so deeply into the armies of Napoleon. The very name of the Moors is enough to present to the fancy the showy turbans and glittering cimeters, the strange military religion of the crescent, and all the hardihood of the followers of Mahomet. We have placed before us, likewise, Cordova, and Granada with its palace of the Alhambra, clad with a thousand oriental images, which, if not indigenous to the soil, were so long established there, that they will continue to give a peculiar character to the inhabitants of that country, probably for ages yet to come.

The days of knight-errantry, also, succeeding the crusades, must ever shed a mysterious kind of interest over those highly-exciting periods which preceded the revival of letters; and this romantic interest is not lessened, but on the contrary rather enhanced, by the enchanting work of Cervantes. For it may be remarked, that the author contrives to imbue every part of his narrative with such a generous and gentlemanlike tone of chivalrous feeling, that one is apt, in reading it, to regret that nearly all traces of such things are now gone. We are even led to suspect, sometimes, that Cervantes himself must have grieved in his heart at the destruction of the fantastic but graceful edifice which his too successful satire was knocking to pieces. At all events, it is quite clear (whether with or without reason is no great matter), that every one, after reading Don Quixote, conceives he has a distinct notion of Spain and its manners. And as most things in that slow-moving country are at this hour pretty nearly what they were in the days of Sancho, the modern traveller, with a little help from his fancy, may easily transport himself back to those times, which have almost as distinct a place in his memory as any through which he himself can have passed. Such, indeed, is the graphic skill of this incomparable writer, that I would even go farther, and say, I am not conscious of retaining in my memory more than a very few real scenes, and all of early date, which are more vividly traced on the mind than those over which the worthy knight of La Mancha and his squire performed their most delightful of all journeys in quest of adventures.

The history of Columbus too, with all its slaughters and treasures, its conquests and crimes, is pressed into the service of our imagination, along with the mighty voyager's cold-hearted

patrons, 'Los Reyes Catolicos,' the celebrated Ferdinand and Isabella of the fifteenth century; and so strongly are we fascinated by the deeds of those romantic times, that the very words Castile and Arragon, Mexico and Peru, Cortez and Pizarro, in spite of all their horrors, compel us to admire the energy of days, supposed by some to be now quite gone by. I, certainly, am not of this opinion; but, be that as it may, those ancient events have left behind them the most striking marks of their existence in every corner of the Peninsula; just as the Moorish occupation of the country for so many centuries has left a portion of its swarthy hue to the inhabitants, and given a character at once of vigour and of ornament to their beautiful language.

The Inquisition, and the whole frame-work of Catholicism in Spain, though they would be intolerable for us to live under, have by no means failed to contribute their share of picturesque interest to that country, when viewed at a little distance. Our imagination, I have often found, is very curiously acted upon when we come into the actual presence of such things for the first time in our lives. Up to the moment of our visit, although we cannot reasonably deny their existence, we have yet a sort of latent doubt as to their being real; and are apt, accordingly, to come to the falsest conclusions.

All mankind, at least all European mankind, take a merry sort of interest in Spain, from the scampish adventures of Gil Blas, which form a capital low-life pendant to the proceedings of the well-bred Don Quixote. With all its coarseness, and in spite of the hero being a thorough-bred Frenchman in thought, word, and deed, there are left in Gil Blas so many touches of genuine Spanish, as well as of universal nature, that the picture of Peninsular manners is certainly incomplete without him, exotic though he be.

To whichever side, therefore, we turn our attention on viewing Spain, we discover more objects purely fanciful, or which are raised above the vulgarity of every-day life, than we can, perhaps, expect to meet with in almost any other country. By far the greater part, indeed, of what most people know of Spanish history and adventures belongs to the imagination; and thus the Peninsula comes to occupy a place in our thoughts side by side with those fairy lands, of which, while many of the incidents are wild and impossible, there is generally preserved enough of resemblance with our own world to claim our strongest sympathy.

When to these fascinating sources of enduring interest we come to superadd the reflected heat of that enthusiasm which had set the Peninsula in a blaze about the middle of the year 1808, in consequence of Napoleon's designs against that country, it will easily be understood that we newly-fledged officers looked about us with delight and astonishment at first landing, and that we caught with eagerness at every little symptom which ministered to the passions, and prejudices, and wild expectations, we had imported with us.

> "First from his trance the heroic Spaniard woke;
> His chains he broke,
> And casting off his neck the treacherous yoke,
> He call'd on England—on his generous foe!
> For well he knew, that wheresoe'er
> Wise policy prevail'd, or brave despair,
> Thither would Britain's liberal succours flow,—
> Her arm be present there."
>
> SOUTHEY'S *Carmen Triumphale.*

Thus sings the most truly Spanish poet that was ever born out of that noble peninsula. For it is difficult, indeed, to conceive, and still more difficult to find, even in Spain, any author who seems to possess a deeper or a more genuine poetical enthusiasm in everything relating to that country, than marks almost every word which this powerful writer has said upon it.

Of course, like our betters, we gave the Spaniards credit, in advance, on the present occasion, for every patriotic virtue under the sun, including military courage and discipline, a generous self-devotion to their country, and, above all, a total absence of jealousy towards those allies whose wealth and strength were streaming in upon them, to aid them in the unequal contest with their gigantic enemy.

It cost us some time, and many a sigh, before these goodly visions were swept away, and we became sensible, by sharp experience, that although the Spaniards are the most agreeable company possible, and their history the most romantic in the world, they are amongst the worst persons on earth to co-operate with in services requiring, besides mere animal courage, the qualities of promptitude of action, and fidelity to concerted arrangement. These attributes, which are the life and soul of all military operations, are doubly necessary when allied forces come to act together, and where those habits of obedience and exact order which form the essence of discipline cannot be so fully established as when the whole army belongs to one nation. But since the Spaniards will obey nobody but their own officers, and not always even these, any military concert with such people is totally out of the question. This unpleasant truth is now as well known to military and naval men as any proposition in the science of engineering; but many a brave fellow bit the dust ere it was properly recognised, or acted upon in practice. The great and gallant Sir John Moore (whom, by the way, I saw carried from the field of battle), though amongst the first, and certainly the noblest, was not the last victim to the delusion, which borrowed from history a character and a name almost as unsuited to the modern Spaniard, as that of the 'world's masters' would be if applied to the Romans of the present day!

Of all this, however, we knew nothing, and cared nothing, when we first anchored in the Endymion, off the town of Corunna, on the 8th of November, 1808. As soon as circumstances allowed of it, and the more active duty of disembarking the troops was over, another officer and myself obtained leave to go on shore; and having no fixed object in view, we landed at some distance from the city. The first thing that struck us as curious was hearing two ploughboys on the top of the bank whistling, "for all the world," as my notes have it, "as they do in England." I suppose we had expected to find everything different, and were therefore surprised to encounter any objects of resemblance. My companion, being an older traveller, was familiar with such scenes; but I think it was the first time I had landed in any

country where the language and, more or less, the manners were not English. In the West Indies, indeed, where, as I should have before stated, we barely touched in my midshipman's days, the scenery is widely dissimilar; but even the rudest negro there jabbers English; and along the continent of America there is no difference of moment in these respects.

I had taken a hammer on shore with me to break a specimen or two of the rock for a geological friend; and I dare say the natives were quite as much surprised to see an officer in a cocked hat and sword cracking stones, as the said officer had been to hear them whistling at their plough. As our heads were fuller of the patriotic mania, at that time at its height, than geology, we at once commenced experimenting on this point with our new acquaintances; and I said to one of them, in Spanish, previously got ready for the purpose by help of the dictionary and grammar, "What sort of a person is Buonaparte? How do you like him?"

"Que tal! What sort of a person?" bawled out the young Galician; and then punning, loud enough to be heard half-way to the ship: "No es *Buena*parte, sino *Mala*parte!" "He is a bad, bad-hearted fellow," he continued; "and if I only had him here, you should see how I would beat him to pieces." Then stepping forward, he snatched the hammer from my hand, and thumped away so lustily at his own breast, that I almost thought he would knock a hole in it, in practical illustration of his wordy enthusiasm.

We then tried him on the other tack, and called out "Viva Fernando Septimo!"

"Ah! Viva! viva!" screamed out both the youths; "and may George the Third also live for a thousand years!" It was chiefly out of such vapouring materials, that people, whose imaginations were ready to take fire, were to be kindled, as they and we supposed, into real action. Accordingly, after we parted from the boys, we strode along the hills with all the animation of those classical heroes, the knights-errant of romance, come to deliver a magnanimous nation from the grasp of foreign tyranny, to hurl the despot from his throne, and to perform those mighty prodigies of valour which mean much, but end in nothing at all!

Upon the first notification we had of our probable destination, shortly before leaving England, I had written off to a friend who I knew had acquaintances in Spain, and begged him to send me letters of introduction. By return of post came simply a parcel by the mail, but no letter. I knew the handwriting, and opened the packet with some curiosity. It contained nothing but a Spanish grammar and dictionary, without any note or message. The hint, however, was sufficiently broad; and in consequence two of my messmates besides myself, after a good laugh at the quaintness of the implied advice, commenced that very day to study the language which was to serve as our best introduction to the inhabitants of the new country we were about to visit. Both my fellow-students advanced rapidly; and one of them in particular, who possessed in a high degree the enviable faculty of acquiring languages, succeeded so well, that before we reached Corunna he had mastered the elementary stages of the grammar, and only waited for practice to give him a just pronunciation, and a greater command of sentences. The other officer followed at some distance in his friend's wake; but it was nearly as many months before I could accomplish, by hard labour, as much as these gentlemen had gained readily in a few weeks: so great is the difference between men's capacities in this respect. I believe, however, that I materially retarded my own progress by tormenting myself too much with the grammar, and by endeavouring to get a number of insulated words by heart. The system of Dufief, called now, if I mistake not, the Hamiltonian method, appears to be far the best for persons, who, like us, were anxious to acquire, as soon as possible, the habit of conversing in a foreign language, without being particularly desirous to go deep into the subject, or in the first instance to master its refinements.

The principle of this method, as most people are perhaps aware, lies in committing to memory, as a primary step, a great number, not of insulated words, but sentences, of more or less length and complication, and having these so completely ready for use, that when any idea suggests itself, the words will follow as readily as they do when the expression is required to be given in our native language. By this means, M. Dufief assures us, and I have had ample means of knowing the truth of his assertion, not only are many more words acquired than by any other method, but insensibly, though correctly and firmly, a considerable part of the grammar is likewise taught. Then, and not till then, the rules themselves may be looked at with advantage; for at this stage only can their meaning be so well understood as to render them available in the practice of speaking. To commence with grammar, in learning a spoken language, is perhaps the most complete instance of putting the cart before the horse that is anywhere to be met with. How is it that children learn their own language? Not by grammatical rules, certainly. And why should grown people disdain to follow nature in her method of teaching the art of speaking? Such is M. Dufief's very simple and obvious reasoning; and experience seems to show its solidity.

Some twelve years after the period I am now writing about, I was sent to South America in command of a ship; and one of the first things I did was to get several copies of Dufief's book, which has been admirably adapted to the Spanish language. It bears the affected title of "Naturaleza Descubierta, or Nature Displayed in her Mode of teaching Languages to Man." The first volume consists entirely of sentences, beginning with short and easy ones, and going on to others longer and more idiomatic: the second, of grammatical rules, with copious and clear examples; and although I think the verbs are expanded to a needless and troublesome length, nothing can be more satisfactory than the explanations. That is to say, if they are studied only by persons who have already grappled manfully with the first volume, and thus put themselves in possession of a considerable mass of the language, including the grammar, though, all the while, they may be no more conscious of this fact than a child is aware that it is chattering grammatically when speaking its own mother-tongue.

In South America, when amongst the Spanish colonists, I put Dufief's book into the hands of all the midshipmen under my charge, and recommended it also to several of the officers, who applied themselves to the study of Spanish by this method. An immediate effect in every instance was obvious; and it was very pleasing to notice how much, after a little time, the grammar, which in general is the greatest of all conceivable bores, and a positive impediment to conversation, became a help to the students. I frequently observed my young friends dipping, as it is called, a good way a-head, and searching, with no small curiosity, amongst the rules in the second volume, in order to ascertain whether or not the notions they had themselves formed on this subject, by the mere study of the sentences in the first volume, were correct or otherwise. In this way grammar may be rendered, as it ought to be, a powerful auxiliary; just as a knowledge of the principles of mechanical philosophy materially assists a seaman in the management of a ship's sails; or an acquaintance with astronomy directs the eye, and gives precision to the hand, of the navigator who has already learned the ordinary manipulations of his art.

In the course of service, I have found it useful, and in some cases absolutely necessary, to study French, Spanish, Hindustani, and Malay. On all these occasions I unfortunately went the wrong way to work, by commencing with the grammar, and not choosing to go faster with my tongue than I could follow with my head. The consequence was, that the unintelligible grammar entangled itself so inextricably with the words, that the sentences which, had they been learned by ear alone, would have flowed readily, were in general found to jostle one another, and to fall so far behind the sense, that, instead of being a pleasure to converse in a foreign tongue, it became a positive pain.

It is so very great an advantage to nautical men to possess a knowledge of the dialects spoken in other countries, that I venture again and again to recommend it as one of the primary studies to which a young sailor's attention should be directed. Of course, I mean his chief extra study; for his strictly professional duties must, at all times, and under all circumstances, be his first object.

I was once in a Spanish port, where it became my duty to open a correspondence with the local authorities, and it was of the greatest importance to get answers speedily. Speed, however, is not the quality for which the worthy Dons are most remarkable; and I was vexed to find that the only interpreter which the local government could procure was a renegado English seaman, an illiterate fellow, who, from having made a certain number of voyages to Cadiz, besides being confined a year as prisoner of war at Ferrol, readily undertook the office of linguist. Even his English was not the most classical; but his Spanish was a horrible jumble indeed!

It is the established custom in the Navy for all our communications on official business to be written in English, not in the language of the country where we may have anchored. It is obvious that this is necessary; for no stranger could be expected to convey his meaning so accurately in a foreign language as not occasionally to commit his own authorities at home upon some point of language: and it is quite enough, as most governments, I suspect, know too well, to have the other sins of their officers to answer for, without adding to their mystifications the errors which would arise from communicating in a strange dialect.

In the instance above alluded to, I had good reason to know that my despatches, however clearly they might be expressed in English, would stand no chance of conveying to the Spaniards any notion whatsoever of my meaning, if subjected to the process, miscalled translation, adopted by their precious interpreter, nicknamed by them, "Juan Ingles," probably from his knowing so little Spanish. In this dilemma I adopted a practice recommended to me by an experienced hand in such matters, which, from its obvious nature, I suppose, must be often followed in like circumstances. By the help of my books I concocted the best translation I could of my own letter, made the clerk copy it, and placed it under the same cover with the original English despatch, but without signature, or any other mark which could impart to it an official character. Possibly the Spanish was not, in strictness, much more purely Castilian than the translation which Don Juan, the interpreter, would have hammered out; but I felt quite sure of its being truer to my own meaning than anything which could have been produced by a person so completely uneducated, and so incapable of really understanding the sense of the English letter itself.

The result, at all events, was, that the Spanish authorities sent their answer in as reasonable a time as could be expected from persons of their habits, and probably quite as soon as they would have done had my despatch been written in the choicest Spanish. What was more to the purpose, I had generally the satisfaction of seeing that the meaning I had wished to convey was not misunderstood.

Before leaving this subject of the utility of languages to officers, which, though nobody can possibly doubt it, few people appear sufficiently aware of, I may mention one anecdote, out of many which might be adduced in favour of such acquirements.

When Sir Samuel Hood had his flag in the Minden, 74, as commander-in-chief in India, and I was one of his lieutenants, we contrived to run the ship on the Coleroon shoal, upon the Coromandel coast, forty or fifty leagues south of Madras. There is not much tide in those seas, but what little there was appeared to be ebbing, so that the ship fixed herself firmly on the edge of the shoal; and as there was every appearance of our being under the necessity of lightening her of the guns and stores before she could be hove off, the Admiral became anxious to have the assistance of boats and rafts, on which to place these heavy things.

I was accordingly despatched in the jolly-boat to procure assistance of the description alluded to, and also to ascertain exactly whereabouts we were. I felt not a little puzzled how to proceed; for the night was dark, and I had no knowledge of the coast, while the usual heavy surf which prevails along this whole shore rolled furiously on the beach; so that, although there was but little wind, I saw no chance of being able to effect a

landing. To have returned to the Admiral, however, with a cock-and-a-bull story of difficulties not overcome would have ruined me for ever in the opinion of that energetic officer, who, as he never made a difficulty himself, bestowed but little patience on those persons under his command who, in place of executing the service required, showed their ingenuity in substituting good reasons for having failed.

I rowed on for several miles, in great doubt what to do; for to have attempted crossing the surf on the shores of the Carnatic in a man-of-war's jolly-boat, would have served no purpose but giving the sharks a good supper. At length, to my great joy, we hit upon one of the natives fishing from a catamaran, the rudest of all sea-going contrivances. It consists of a couple of logs, each six or eight feet long, lashed side by side together; and on this the man places himself on his knees, resting the weight of his body chiefly on the heels; for if his feet were left to dangle overboard, they would very soon be snapped off by John Shark. My acquaintance with Hindustani was not very extensive; but as I had made a journey not long before across the peninsula of India, from Madras to Bombay, what I knew proved quite enough to enable me to hold a conversation with this fisherman, and to learn from him that we were off a place called Porto Novo. He added, that if I could only succeed in getting into the creek, the Honourable Company's master-attendant would readily furnish any number of boats and rafts for the purpose required by the Admiral.

On asking this poor fellow where the entrance was, he pointed to the surf, said there was a passage at least ten feet wide, and added, that nothing could be easier than passing safely through. Not the smallest opening, nor anything like one, could I see; but only a huge, boiling surf, guarding the whole shore, like a great rampart of snow, or rather, I should say, of coral; for in those regions such frigid images never strike the fancy. A small bribe induced the Hindoo fisherman to haul up his stone anchor, to seize his double-bladed paddle, and to act as pilot. I felt a little posed at first by his technicalities, till I got into the bow of the boat, just astern of his catamaran, and made him point out the path we ought to follow. Had I not possessed a certain scantling of his language, however, I should hardly have been justified in poking into such a place in so dark a night. The passage appeared sufficiently terrific, even with a pilot; while without one, it would have been completely impracticable. By watching the surf as it broke, and using the other precautions necessary in such cases, we at last reached the still water within the snug cove or creek of Porto Novo.

The master-attendant was just stepping into bed, when I beat up his quarters. With the decision which belongs to every branch of our admirable Indian administration, he drew on his jacket, caught up his straw hat, lying on the top of his palanquin in the corner of the verandah, and was half-way across the compound, or enclosure, of his bungalow, in two minutes after I had delivered Sir Samuel Hood's message. In less than a quarter of an hour from that time, all the male inhabitants of the village, suddenly roused up from their sleeping mats, were assembled on the banks of the river, launching their boats and catamarans; so that the scene which an instant before had formed, by its perfect stillness, such a curious contrast to the tumultuous sound of the waves beyond, now almost rivalled the surf in uproar. The natives of India, it is right to mention, accompany every description of labour with a wild song, not very musical perhaps, but always harmonious to ears which drink in with delight, as mine have ever done, all sorts of sounds connected with the fairy regions of the Eastern world.

I waited till I saw ten or a dozen great boats, and as many rafts afloat, and then observed to the master-attendant, that I thought he and I had better recross the surf, and, by rowing on board quickly, let the Admiral know the assistance he sent for was coming to him.

"I beg your pardon, my good sir," replied this experienced public officer, laughing; "I know the cut of your commander-in-chief's jib far too well for that! Consider how foolish I should look, were I to take a passage with you, as you are good enough to offer me, and all these fellows were to walk back again to bed, as soon as we had reached the back of the surf. No, no; go you off to the Minden, give my compliments to Sir Samuel, and tell him I shall not leave the harbour till the last of the boats is out, but shall keep in the rear of my catamaran fleet, pushing them on till they are all safe alongside his excellency's ship."

It was well I adopted this suggestion; for, on my regaining the Minden, before the native boats and rafts came in sight, the Admiral naturally supposed I had failed in my mission, and began one of those pithy and pertinent lectures for which naval discipline is so famous. He had only reached as far as—"Well, sir, and what the —— has brought you back?"—when I ravished his ears by the news of a set of boats being almost in sight, capable of holding half the guns on board. In fact, the first detachment of the master-attendant's mosquito squadron, as the sailors called it, were then actually within hearing, though scarcely visible; for the sun, still far below the horizon, was only just beginning to send forward some faint touches of a dawn. Ere long, however, the Minden was surrounded by the natives, and the master-attendant himself, leaping on board, explained to the Admiral the nature of the Coleroon shoal, and encouraged him to expect that in a very short time the ship would again be afloat.

The sequel of this story I must defer to another opportunity, as it has no immediate reference to the subject in hand—I mean, the utility of a knowledge of foreign languages to naval officers. But it is now high time we should return to our first walk along the granite cliffs of Corunna.

CHAPTER XXIV.

SPANISH THEATRICALS AND ENGLISH CRITICS.

As we strolled along the path leading to the heights of Santa Cruz, which overlook the town of Corunna, every person we met saluted us and wished us good day. This custom, which, I

believe, is universal in Spanish countries, we set down to the feeling of the moment, and were gratified accordingly. On coming to a village, we observed a wine-house crowded with people, and thinking this a good opportunity for studying manners, in we entered. Every one took off his hat, and rose, while the landlord stepped forward with a cup of his best beverage. Of course, we drank to the health of Ferdinand the Seventh, which appeared to please them amazingly, for the men shook hands with us in turn as we took leave.

On a little grass-plot in front of the house several women had stationed themselves on hearing that some English officers had entered the pulperia, as these public-houses are called, and had crowded round to see what was to be seen. As I could not then be aware that it was contrary to the customs of the country for gentlemen to shake hands with ladies, I naturally offered mine to a very pretty young person standing near the door, a tall, black-eyed girl, deeply bronzed by the ardent sun of the Peninsula ; a circumstance which in no respect lessened the interest of the picture in our eyes, which were looking about for anything and everything characteristic. The Spanish damsel, startled at this unwonted freedom, drew back amongst the group of women ; upon which, of course, I could do no less than pay her some compliment upon her bashfulness. This, however, I could only effect by repeating two or three of the most sounding and pompous phrases, culled and got by heart that morning out of the Spanish grammar.

The want of keeping between these high-flown expressions and the occasion which drew them forth, added to the defective pronunciation in which they must have been uttered by a person who had never before tried to speak the language, set off the whole party, male and female, into a loud but good-natured laugh. Upon hearing which, the old gentleman came from the house, and fearing, perhaps, that we might take this mirth amiss, stepped forward, caught the shy lady by the wrist, drew her gently back to where we stood, and, with that ready politeness which never forsakes these well-bred people, insisted upon her shaking hands with the strangers. The nut-brown maid, though she coloured a good deal, and affected to be rather angry, complied, gracefully enough, with this unusual mandate ; and the scene would have ended capitally, if the strangers had only possessed one half the tact of the natives. Unfortunately, our habits had been formed in ruder lands ; and thinking a tavern-keeper must be a tavern-keeper all over the world, we indiscreetly offered our venerable friend payment for his wine ! The old fellow, quite indignant at this misapprehension of his character, or perhaps provoked at our clumsy blindness to the romantic sentiment of the moment, actually thrust the money back into our pockets, and then bowed us out of the village with all the dignity of a grandee of the first class !

In the evening we repaired to the opera at Corunna : a pistareen and a half, which, I think, is about fourteen-pence, was the price of admission to the pit. The house appeared not quite so large as the theatre in the Haymarket ; and, like most foreign places of this kind, was kept, I believe on purpose, almost dark, or what we should call ill lighted. The pit was divided into separate stalls, with a contrivance to each by which the seat might be folded back and locked, till the 'open sesame' of a quarter of a dollar should be applied to it. There were three tiers of boxes, and over all a gallery, exclusively occupied by women, at each entrance to which stood a grim-looking Cerberus, armed with a musket and fixed bayonet, to prevent any intermixture of the sexes. England, it may be observed, is the only country where this degree of propinquity between the men and women is not interfered with. Even the pit is appropriated, in Spain, exclusively to the men ; but in the intermediate ranges of boxes, the natural order of things is allowed to follow its course.

The first piece was one of those old Scriptural exhibitions called Mysteries, or rather Moralities. It represented Nebuchadnezzar, first in all his glory, when his greatness reached unto heaven ; and then, in his downfall and misery, 'eating grass, like an ox in the fields, with his hair like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws.' These variations in the fortunes of this ill-advised monarch gave ample room for the display of theatrical tricks, which were much applauded. One of these led to some very irreverent mirth. Instead of casting three full-grown men, Shadrach and his companions, into the burning fiery furnace, they varied the history a little, and, by rather a broad poetical license, substituted three children ; which change on this occasion led to an awkwardness in the unity of the piece, very provoking, I dare say, to the stage-manager, though it made the audience laugh heartily.

The children, after being tossed into the fire, were exhibited, in the next moment, amongst the clouds, as angels. But as it might have been inconvenient, or dangerous, to set them actually flying about, a device was hit upon to produce the same effect, as far as could be. An upright pole being fixed in the back part of the stage, three bars were attached to it, on the ends of which the little angels being stuck, the whole apparatus was made to whirl round amongst a set of most substantial-looking clouds. For a time all this seemed to us very good fun, for the children smiled and flapped their wings as they were bid. Presently, however, one of the urchins, becoming alarmed at her elevation, gave a squeak, so very different from the music of the spheres, that we could distinctly hear the beatified spirit getting a pretty smart lecture from the prompter's little box, in the front part of the stage. I suspect the cords which bound it to the upper world were rather too tightly drawn ; for, after one of those ominous quiescent pauses, during which a child when hurt gathers all its strength, only to give out a louder roar, our young friend perched in the clouds of the theatre set up such a bawling as I have seldom heard out of the nursery. It suited its little actions, also, to its loud sounds, by kicking and struggling, till the whole firmament of the stage-manager's invention appeared in jeopardy. The poor man at length, losing all patience, came forward and scolded the child, till the laughter of the house drowned every other noise, and the curtain fell amidst universal applause.

The next piece was also a sacred drama, called

"Daniel in the Lions' Den," which, to our great astonishment, caused almost as much mirth as the terror of the suffering angel had done before. The natives, indeed, appeared to come prepared for this sort of thing; and although the strangers were more scandalised than they were at such impious trifling, it was totally beyond the power of human muscles to preserve an unmoved countenance during this scene.

The lions, as may be supposed, mustered in great force; and odd enough figures they looked, sprawling about the stage amongst priests, cardinals, nuns, soldiers, and all sorts of characters, brought, for what reason I know not, into the den along with Daniel, manifestly in the teeth of all history, sacred or profane. Into the midst of this goodly company, a great clumsy angel descended, by the aid of stout ropes, thick enough to have made topsail-haulyards for a frigate, and, after performing the object of his mission, by complimenting Daniel on his good looks and courage, again took flight amongst the pasteboard clouds and copper thunders of the theatrical sky.

As the celestial messenger was hoisted slowly upwards, all the monks, virgins, and other companions of Daniel, fell on their knees to the sound of music in the orchestra, so very beautiful, and played in such fine taste, that we almost forgot the absurdity of the rest of the performance. But the lions, who well knew their power over the audience, and were not to be so neglected, presently marched to the front of the stage, keeping correct time to the music. This was comical enough; but they had not done; for they now gradually raised themselves on their nether ends, and, with the most ineffable looks of mock piety, extended their fore paws towards the retiring angel, in the attitude of prayer. This abominable piece of burlesque was almost too much for an audience, prepared, as we have seen, to swallow a good deal; for, after pausing a moment, to consider, as it appeared, whether they should hiss the lions or applaud them, they burst into a shout of outrageous mirth. The actors caught the infection, lions inclusive; and even Daniel himself, putting his hands to his sides, roared with laughter in the middle of the stage! Could it reasonably be expected, that a couple of heretics in the pit were to sit grave spectators of such a scene?

"Susannah and the Elders" followed, and was played in such a way, that if it had been the express object of the evening's entertainment to turn everything that was sacred into ridicule, nothing could have been devised more effectual. In truth, the foreigners who were present appeared the only persons sincerely shocked by exhibitions so repugnant to their tastes and habits, but which they had little dreamed of finding in a Roman Catholic country, and especially among a people generally reputed not only bigoted, but highly circumspect in all that relates to the Church.

This strange exhibition at the theatre in Corunna, however, was only one of the first of a long series of incidents it was my fortune to witness in Spain and elsewhere, which have helped to prove to me how impossible it is, by any amount of previous inquiry, to come at even tolerably correct notions upon almost any distant subject. What is even more curious, and perhaps not less important, is the fact that, even on the spot, and after a protracted experience, a traveller is still exceedingly liable to commit, at times, almost as gross blunders in his estimate of foreign sentiments and manners as on the first day he landed. So much less simple is it to observe correctly, and to generalise safely, than people, who have not tried, are at all aware of.

That this is no exaggerated statement of the difficulty of gaining an exact acquaintance with remote scenes, I am pretty sure will be felt by most people who have wandered much over the globe, and looked about them in good faith. And yet we find by far the greater number of persons in society (particularly amongst those who have never quitted home), holding forth, with confident reliance on their own infallibility, as to this and that detail of foreign manners and customs, respecting which even the most careful, experienced, and unprejudiced observers, frankly confess themselves but partially informed. The smile of surprise, and the hopeless shrug of the shoulders, which this presumption is apt to produce in a real traveller, change to something less indulgent, when these people, who, by possibility, can know but little or nothing about the matter, confidently pronounce the statements and opinions of persons who have actually visited the countries in question to be prejudiced and erroneous!

It is in vain to suggest to such dictators that the traveller whom they handle so roughly, and whose authority they hold so cheap, has formed his opinions deliberately on the very spot best adapted for pursuing the inquiry, and with all the advantage of leisure and exclusive attention to that one object, or class of objects, upon which his critics pronounce so dogmatically, although they (the critics) have never once stirred from their own fire-sides, and although, for every month or year the traveller has given to a patient investigation of the subject, they may never have had it in their power to bestow on it one day!

Yet, to do the critics justice, we must not forget, that new information, especially of a political nature, relating to any foreign country, unless it be given with great address, is apt to reach the mind of an opponent to the writer's views very much in the shape of an insult to his understanding. Preposterous as it may appear, such new knowledge, if it differ essentially from his preconceived notions, irritates the listener almost as much as a reflection on his character would offend him personally. If it shall happen, from the traveller's previous writings, or from any other cause, that very different things have been expected at his hands, the offence to the party he has ceased to agree with in opinion is held to be greatly aggravated.

Exactly, indeed, according to the particular side which the author takes, so are his opinions and his powers of observation and of description sure to be rated by those persons, to whose crude and home-made views his facts or his reasonings stand opposed. If, however, he chance to fall in with the established dogmas of their party, straightway he is "judicious, experienced, observant, a valuable accession to the good cause, a very philosopher afloat!" But if, in an evil hour for his credit with them, he shall presume to advance facts, or broach arguments on the other side

(however reasonable he may be), he is scouted as "hasty in his observations, ill-informed on the subjects he discusses, and, above all, he is desperately prejudiced." In short, to sum up his condemnation in one awful sentence, the poor man "is lost for ever to the liberal party!"

Now, I would ask, who and what are the people taking upon themselves to pronounce thus arrogantly? What I mean is, their relative capacity of forming a sound judgment on the subject, compared with that of the traveller whose account they deride and depreciate at this sweeping rate?

Which of two men, whom, for discussion's sake, we shall suppose are both strongly prejudiced on a particular point, but thinking exactly alike about it, and starting at the same moment to acquire further information, is most likely, at the end of a considerable period, to come to a correct result; he who actually goes to the spot, examines it with his own eyes, diligently, patiently, and exclusively; or he who, during the very same interval, has not only had a hundred other things to attend to, but shall have acquired no fresh means of ascertaining whether or not his original opinions were sound?

Suppose that two such persons are, in the outset of their inquiry, equally prejudiced, but in opposite ways, and the one who goes abroad comes back with his own views confirmed, then there might certainly be very fair grounds for suspecting that his investigations had not been conducted with a view to truth alone, but rather with a leaning to his own original conceptions of the matter. At all events, there would be nothing unreasonable in his old antagonist considering him as still prejudiced.

But if the two persons shall begin the inquiry by thinking exactly alike upon the subject in discussion, and one of them shall then set out to investigate the facts, with a strong desire to confirm, by the authority of actual observation, those preconceived notions held by both parties; and if, notwithstanding this common tendency of their wishes, the traveller, when he reaches the spot, shall be so completely outmastered by the irresistible evidence of experience, as to take, in spite of himself, a different view from that which was formerly held jointly by him and his friend; is it not almost ludicrous to hear the man who has never budged an inch from his own library, crowing over the blunders, the errors, and what he is pleased to call the prejudices, hasty observations, and confined views of the traveller, who, in the interval, may have traversed the country in question a dozen times, and conversed with thousands of its best-informed inhabitants!

As a matter of mere speculation, this discussion will probably be thought to possess little more than a passing interest; while, to young persons, it may not be altogether without profit, as teaching them both modesty and forbearance. Practically considered, also, with reference to what really occurs between travellers and the public who sit in judgment upon their reports, some of these reflections may be found useful to those who consider it a higher duty to preserve their own peace of mind than to struggle for conquests in argumentation. At all events, I can only say, woe betide the ill-advised writer, who, in a moment of disappointment, or of anger, or of zeal in any cause, shall dream of such folly as making a reply to those literary or party antagonists who assert, almost in express terms, that, unless he thinks as they choose to dictate, the more a man inquires into a remote and complicated subject, the less he is likely to give a sound opinion upon its merits!

If a traveller who visits an unknown country (Loo Choo, for instance) describes a state of manners entirely new to all his readers, he will have some chance of general favour. In that case he is dependent for his success, first, upon his own powers of observation, to perceive what he meets with so distinctly and vividly as to be able afterwards to recall, or recreate it in his imagination: and, secondly, upon his talents for description, that he may represent what he has seen in such a manner, that the picture shall not only be strictly true to the facts as they struck his eye, but shall preserve enough of fancy about its colouring, as well as its lights and shades, to prevent its becoming merely a dull, dry copy, which every one knows is the tamest thing in the world. In the instance supposed, that of a totally new scene, the traveller must lay his account with being occasionally accused of betraying the agency of too active a fancy; but if he does his duty as a writer, and makes it a point of conscience to confine himself strictly to describe how he actually did feel on the spot, without having any object in view but to convey a just representation of what he saw, or thought he saw, and knows that he felt, he will probably leave on the minds of his readers a juster image of the scene, all things considered, than if, departing from his own natural character, and fearful of trusting himself, he had sought to check his imagination, and conform more rigidly to the scale of description which a less enthusiastic observation might have suggested.

Of course, a traveller of any taste or fancy, who, without despising ordinary rules, chooses occasionally to depart from them, and, as he thinks for himself, resolves to act in like manner, must take his chance of finding, that when more sober-minded observers come to visit the same scenes afterwards, they will be astonished to encounter things so different from what, according to their reading of their predecessor's description, they had been led to expect. These new travellers forget that this want of agreement may perhaps reside essentially in the different conformation of their own mental optics. It is not, perhaps, too much to say, that if twenty distinct visits were to be made to one spot, by as many separate voyagers, we might expect a score of different accounts, each correctly representing what the parties thought and felt, but no two of them much alike!

The truth is, that external nature is hardly more boundless in her varieties, than she is wonderful in the diversity with which she has gifted different individuals, first, with the capacity of observing, and, secondly, with the power of describing. To which may well be added, the extraordinary differences of taste and opinion amongst those who have to pronounce upon the merits of such descriptions. Even in accounts of regions, where the traveller is required to treat of places about which we at home confessedly know hardly anything,—for example, of Otaheite, which is sometimes a Paradise, sometimes a Pan-

demonium, according as it is visited by a sailor or a saint,—we are still reluctant to resign the reins of our imagination into the author's hands, and are often strongly tempted to substitute our own crude notions for those suggested to us by his ample experience. If this be true, as I think it is, how much more complicated must the unhappy voyager's task become, when called upon to treat not of unknown countries and new races of men, but of institutions, and customs, and manners, about which most of his readers conceive they already know a great deal, and whereon they have all formed, more or less decidedly, some antecedent conception, or, to give it the true name, some darling prejudice, which they have far more delight in cherishing as it is, than satisfaction in comparing with the truth. And if, unfortunately, the irritating topic of politics enter largely into the narrative, the plot is always much thickened.

There are, then, two cases, and, when viewed in the widest sense, only two, which can arise, upon which the writer must make up his mind, resolutely, to one or the other, or consent to hold his peace altogether. If the traveller be young and inexperienced in such matters, and the events he has witnessed happen either to be uncommon, or very striking in themselves (as in the revolutionary scenes which I myself witnessed ten or twelve years ago in poor South America), the chances are, he will take what is somewhat impertinently called the 'liberal side,' and by describing, in the most glowing terms he can muster, the triumphs of mere free-will, without adverting to, or even knowing distinctly, anything of the dangers attendant upon sudden and lawless independence, he will be sure to gain the noisy applause of the multitude. His book will circulate everywhere, and may be generally praised; because even those who distrust many of its doctrines, as permanent rules of political action, are unwilling to encounter the certainty of popular abuse at the moment, by assuming the ungracious task of throwing cold water on what seem such generous aspirations after liberty.

"Nothing can be more correct than your pictures," all classes of readers will say to the popular author; "nothing can be truer than your *inferences*: we are only astonished to see how accurately you have described things in a country of which we knew so little."

And so the good easy author chuckles, and fancies that all this is legitimate praise, wilfully forgetting that his readers, even by their own showing, are not, and cannot possibly be, competent judges of the accuracy of his descriptions. They commend his truth of painting, not because they know it to be a good likeness, but because the portrait he shows them resembles the creature of their own fancy.

Let the same man afterwards, either from curiosity, or with the natural ambition of adding to his utility, resolve to vary his ground a little; and, instead of viewing countries in their political infancy, as in the first experiment, let him examine their somewhat *maturer growth* (as I did lately in the United States of North America). Let him also bring to the inquiry a longer experience, and a few more years of reflection, with somewhat more extensive habits of study, of thought, and of conversation, to bear on a topic of such general interest. Let him then set about investigating this important and curious subject manfully, not in books alone, but by close, varied, and extensive observation on the spot.

What course, it may be asked, is this traveller to take, if he find that, in spite of all his predilections in favour of the notions his first work may have helped to confirm, and his very natural desire to preserve the good opinion of the public by proving their first opinions correct, he is compelled, by the sheer force of actual observation, to perceive that he has been all along in error? What is he now to say if he shall discover ample proofs that, so far from those popular ideas which he formerly held on the subject being judicious, they are not only full of mischief in present practice, but fraught, like another Pandora's box, with every species of injury to the cause of genuine freedom, virtue, and national happiness?

There can, of course, be but one answer as to what is his duty. But he must be prepared (as I can honestly say I was) to take the consequences; and, in addition to the inevitable charges of inconsistency, and of being a renegade, he must be content with a very different kind of approbation from what he formerly received when supporting the more popular or vociferous side. For that party which confounds licence with liberty, and calls the populace the people, always has had, and always will have, the greatest actual numbers on its side, together with the loudest speakers, and the most confident pretenders to infallibility of judgment.

After a due experience, however, the author will discover, that in politics there are two very different sorts of praise bestowed on those who, from preferring well-working things as they now are to untried experiments, how high soever their promise, conscientiously take what is called the Conservative, or true Tory side of the question.

The commendation which this author will receive from his own party is qualified, measured out cautiously by the drop, and is always very tardy in its expression: but the other, which is also the most satisfactory sort of approbation, is vehement, prompt, and unbounded.

The praise first alluded to, or that which is slow, temperate, and scarcely heard, comes from those who are contented with the existing institutions of the country, or from those who, without denying the rapid advances of knowledge, are yet extremely reluctant to meddle rashly with establishments that have done so much, and are still doing so much, to give permanence and solidity to all the blessings of steady government in church and state, and which (whether as cause or effect) are closely allied with national as well as private virtue and prosperity of every kind.

The other sort of praise, which the writer who defends the present institutions of the country should covet with much more anxiety, and which he ought to consider by much the more gratifying of the two, is the unmixed disapprobation of those persons who take the opposite view, and who conceive that, as everything is radically wrong, nothing but radical reform will do the state any good. Even the more gentlemanlike, but, of course, severer censure of those parties who were formerly so loud in their applause of the 'liberal traveller,' is extremely valuable; as it shows that

in his statements he has, at all events, committed no mistake as to the explanation of his own meaning. If, unfortunately, the work of such a writer were to gain the countenance of this self-styled 'liberal party,' he might, indeed, enjoy a momentary gratification in finding that he had not, politically speaking, lost friends who once esteemed him; but a little more reflection would serve to show that, as such approbation could only arise from his having done injustice to his subject, it ought to be regarded as the very reverse of praise.

It must, however, be confessed, that it does require a certain amount of time before these truths come to be seen and felt in their proper light, or that sincere pleasure can be derived from the disapprobation of men who must ever stand high in our esteem on other grounds, but from whom we differ in politics only. It requires a far shorter apprenticeship, indeed, to extract positive gratification from the abuse of those with whom any companionship in sentiment at all, on public affairs, would be a real misfortune.

To reply to such attacks is evidently not only useless, but foolish: useless, because such orators and writers are obviously far beyond the reach of conviction; their minds have long been made up, say they, and consequently are quite shut against new impressions. Yet these very candid personages are invariably the loudest declaimers against prejudice!

The task of answering is also foolish, because it implies that the author, instead of being delighted with, is pained by, those very circumstances which, after all, furnish the most undoubted assurance of his not having been misconceived. Instead of deprecating such attacks, therefore, the traveller should accept them with thankfulness; I do not say with gratitude, because there is no good-will towards him in the gift; but certainly without any unkindly feeling towards the persons who pronounce the malediction.

CHAPTER XXV.

SIR JOHN MOORE.

It was no small relief to us, after the idle and profane travesties of sacred subjects, the mysteries and fooleries of the stage, to witness on another evening an excellent ballet at Corunna, where we saw, for the first time, the bewitching Bolero, a dance which, if it were not imported by the Moors, is assuredly as moresque, and as different from anything European on this side of the Pyrenees, as it is possible to conceive. There is a measured wildness in the sharp clink of the castanet so peculiarly primitive, that I think it must be the device of a very rude state of society. The refinements of a more advanced age, however, have superadded the embellishments of wind and stringed instruments to this savage kind of music, the original purpose of which was, probably, no more than to mark time with precision. And it must be confessed, that the mixture, as now managed, is exceedingly pleasing to the ear. I was lately amused by observing in Paris a curious inversion of this order of things. In one of the first quadrille bands in that capital, the musicians had introduced a kind of rattle, filled with pebbles, resembling, in all respects, the barbarous instruments of music used by the rudest savages on the coast of Africa!

The two seats we had hired lay near the centre of the pit, and, on looking round, we were struck with the curious fact of more than half the audience, in that part of the house, being English officers of the different regiments just landed, 'furred to the ears, and whiskered to the eyes,' and clanking their spurs and sabres against the floor, in all the glittering pride of the first days of a campaign, which, ere long, was to terminate in blood and sorrow.

There were not many ladies in the boxes, for Corunna at this period was more like a great English barrack than a quiet Spanish sea-port, and, in spite of all that discipline could effect, brawls and tumults occurred every night, sufficiently alarming to most females to make them keep within doors, till a more temperate season should arise. Nevertheless, in one of the boxes, near the stage, sat two young ladies with their mama. The beauty of these damsels, the peculiarity of their dress, the well-known mantilla, (then quite new to us,) together with a certain mirthful expression of countenance, engaged not only our attention but that of some half-a-dozen military officers near us.

The more we stared, the more the ladies smiled, till the boleroes and fandangoes of the stage were well nigh forgotten in the realities of the audience. The simplicity of the naval uniform presented such a strong contrast to the splendour of that worn by the Hussars near us, that we soon saw we had no sort of chance at such long bowls; and therefore, prompted and supported by the brazen god of impudence, whose agency in such times of popular excitement effects many more difficult tasks than ours, we resolved to pay these black-eyed Spanish lasses a visit; and off we set accordingly to introduce ourselves. I cannot say that we entered the box without some little misgivings; for there lay before us the risk of being coldly received by the señoritas or their duenna, which would have been followed by the triumphant ridicule of the soldiers in the pit. The military stared in great amazement when they beheld their amphibious rivals marching in to the very centre of the place against which they had been expending so much ammunition during the early part of the evening.

Fortune favoured us, the ladies smiled, and we made good our lodgment. I urged my companion to take the front seat, while I sat on the next; for his Spanish was so much better than mine, that it seemed fair he should bear the brunt. In truth, however, it is marvellous how small a number of words suffice to carry on a dialogue on such occasions. At that moment in Spain, and especially in Galicia, the English, being looked upon as heroes and deliverers, were admitted to a degree of familiarity, which, at other times, would, perhaps, neither have been sought by themselves, nor allowed by the natives, but which was then in keeping with everything else. Accordingly, we flirted and complimented one another till the ballet was over, by which time it was nearly one o'clock in the morning. We could then do no less, of course, than offer the ladies an escort to their home. This they declined at first, saying

their brother was to join them, or meet them on their return. But when we begged to be allowed to guard them so far against the tumults which prevailed at this late hour, they agreed to our proposal; and away we travelled in company, as merrily as if we had been acquainted for half a year.

In passing through one of the narrow streets, we were attacked by a madcap party of half-tipsy, noisy fellows, who must needs have a look, they declared, under the mantillas of our new acquaintances.

"By Jove! we are in for it now," cried my friend, "and must go through with our engagement of protecting these ladies from insult." So out flew our swords, which, glittering in the lamplight, threw the females into still greater terror. The police, aided by the military patrol, were on the spot in a moment, and the affray was instantly put an end to, by the arrest of these rude brawlers, and without further mischief than the fright. Of course, we made a good joke of the whole matter, and were in the midst of a lecture to the ladies upon the remarkable good-sense they had shown in selecting two such trusty knights-errant to guard them from harm, when up ran the brother. This fiery youth, hearing there had been a row, and seeing naked swords, naturally enough concluded that we were the offending parties, and had nearly made a tragedy of our farce. The little Spanish we possessed proved insufficient to pacify the angry Don, who even refused to listen to his sisters, but went on abusing us without mercy. At last, as the matter became rather perplexing, we resolved to try the enemy in French, and were right glad to find we could satisfy him that, so far from being foes, we were the champions of his fair sisters. Upon this explanation, a general laugh and shaking of hands took place; we invited the whole family to come on board our ship next morning, while they, in return, entreated us to visit them on shore; and then, having interchanged vows of eternal friendship, we parted—never to meet, or to see, or to hear of one another again!

Our attention was soon called away to objects of far more important interest, by the arrival of news from the contending armies in the interior of the country. But we had yet to learn how very difficult it was to discriminate between true and false information, as communicated by the Spaniards. I question, indeed, whether this art has yet been, or ever will be fully acquired, even by the most experienced officers who have served in the Peninsula.

I shall not pretend to give any detailed account, or even a sketch, of the state of political or military affairs in Galicia, at the time of our visit. All this has been so minutely, and at the same time so clearly, done by Colonel Napier, the historian of the Peninsular war, and by others, that there is little wanting to satisfy the curiosity of persons who wish to examine the subject in its fullest extent. What we had an opportunity of seeing on the coast was certainly very interesting, but so completely detached from the other operations of the campaign, that it furnished us with no means of judging of what was really going on beyond our own limited field of view, and left us to be tossed about by hopes and fears, in a manner at first very troublesome, but which became eventually almost ludicrous. In examining my notes and letters, written at this highly-exciting period, the ups and downs of the Spaniards' fortunes, and consequently of our hopes, are curiously intermingled.

There came a report to Corunna one day that the Spanish commander Blake had fought a general action against very superior numbers of the French, in which he had entirely routed the invaders, and taken four thousand prisoners, all of whom, it was asserted, were on their way to the coast. In consequence of this news (news indeed!) all was jollity and happiness; and at the opera that night was enacted a piece called "The Brightest Day of Spain," a patriotic exhibition of the times, in which the following strange medley of personages were introduced. First and foremost came our beloved monarch, George III., not ill represented by an actor of no ordinary bulk, hand in hand with Ferdinand VII. These two sovereigns were of course in friendly communication, exchanging good offices, and spouting national vengeance, most theatrically against the French. The measure of arming the peasantry and equipping the regular troops, and drawing assistance from England, formed the minor materials of the first act.

The next group consisted of another couple of high contracting parties, apparently on very good terms with themselves. It will be anticipated, no doubt, that one of these was Buonaparte; but who, except such strange people as the Spaniards, would have conceived the idea of representing him, cheek by jowl, with Old Nick himself! This pair of worthies, however, were introduced together on the stage, which was, of course, fitted up as the infernal regions, with a due proportion of flames and brimstone. The plottings of these two personages, as to the best method of enslaving the Peninsula, occupied the second act.

In the third the tables were turned; for 'Horky Tercero,' as they pronounced the title of our King, and Ferdinand together, had got the upper hand of the confederates; and the devil, having turned king's evidence, betrayed all Napoleon's secrets, defeated his plans, and left him in the lurch. As a measure of retributive justice, poor Bony was now consigned to the care of his old chum below stairs, who, after treading him under foot, entertained his prisoner and the audience by recapitulating, in the presence of the fallen monarch, all the misdeeds of his past political life, in order, as he said, with a very good Satanic grin, to refresh his imperial memory!

On the very morning after this edifying and patriotic spectacle, in which we were told the facility of putting down the armies of Bonaparte was typified, a courier arrived to say that Blake, instead of being the victor, had been completely cut to pieces, after eleven days' fighting against seventy thousand regular French troops! The Spaniards, it may be observed, are never at a loss for figures, but draw upon Cocker without mercy. The messenger further declared he himself had counted six thousand dead Spaniards on the field, all in a row, thereby giving the world to understand that these patriots had been so unflinching as to die in the ranks rather than break their line. The French, it was added, with seventy thousand men (in buckram, I suppose), were in full advance to prevent the junction of Sir John Moore's army

with that of Sir David Baird, in which event the retreat of both divisions of the English army appeared to be inevitable.

As soon as authentic information of these retrograde movements reached the Admiral, we were ordered in the Endymion, with several hundred transports, to Vigo, a port to the southward of Corunna, ready for embarking the troops, should they fall back on that point, as was then expected. Accordingly, we came to an anchor, with our convoy, in that ample bay, at two P. M., on the 30th of November, 1808.

Along with these disheartening accounts from the seat of war we received others of a more cheering nature, about Palafox and his army, Castanos and his army, the rising of the peasantry 'en masse,' the enthusiasm of the whole Peninsula, the goodness of the patriotic cause, and, above all, the measureless treachery of the French. In short, the imagination, filled with so many novel and distracting images, knew scarcely where to settle, whom to believe, or what to wish for.

One thing, however, and only one, was quite entire, that is to say, our own enjoyment of the scene. Nothing came amiss to us young fellows afloat; we cared little where we went; for, to whatever point our steps were directed, we felt sure of finding amusement as well as occupation; so that our ship had not been anchored at our new station, Vigo, two days, before we had made ourselves as much at home amongst the inhabitants as we had contrived to become in Corunna. After the fleet of transports had been arranged for the embarkation, should the troops have made their appearance, nothing remained for us to do but to talk party politics with the men, and to dance, flirt, and chatter with the gay señoritas of Galicia. All this we effected even to greater purpose than in Corunna, for two reasons. In the first place, while we had lost none of our presumption, by the operation of success, we had gained considerably greater fluency in speaking the language, along with rather more knowledge of the manners of the people; and secondly, we enjoyed the most delightful of all advantages, that of being almost the first, and at that time the only foreigners present. At Corunna we entered the field with numberless brother-officers, besides swarms of such showily-dressed military men, fresh from England, with the shine still on their gold lace, that we had little chance of general favour. But here, at Vigo, we had it all to ourselves, and no fellows ever enjoyed their opportunities more than we did. It was really like visiting a new world! and, indeed, we sometimes almost thought, and often said, the whole must be a dream.

The city of Vigo is a most romantic place, perched on the top of a steep rock, and guarded on the land side by vast ranges of bare granite mountains girding it nearly all round, and flanked, towards the sea, by a cluster called the Bayonne Islands. The sharp ridges of this great natural breakwater stand boldly up against the southern sky, and afford complete shelter to the magnificent bay, which indents the country to a considerable distance beyond the town. I have been told by military men, that had the army under Sir John Moore fallen back upon Vigo, they might have embarked at leisure, and the battle of Corunna have been spared; but I am not aware of the technicalities upon which such opinion rests, and I have even seen directly the contrary expressed by a good authority.

Be this as it may, we soon became acquainted with most of the respectable inhabitants of the place; and as everybody crowded on board to see the ship, we had it in our power to show them some attention, in return for their civilities. I dare say our style of living was as new and curious to them as theirs was to us; but all this, for a time, in every country visited by strangers, affords matter for conversation, and, to young folks in particular, is very interesting. It became our peculiar business, also, to adapt ourselves to the habits of the people amongst whom we were cast; and, considering the desultory kind of life which seamen lead, even in the most regular times, no great effort was required to induce us to conform to what we found at Vigo and elsewhere, especially during this period, when our popularity was at its highest.

The time for morning visits terminates at one o'clock, at which hour the Spaniards dine, and afterwards take their siesta, or digestive nap. In the evenings visitors ramble about from house to house, the doors of which are literally what the natives describe them figuratively to be, always open. "My house is entirely at your disposal," is the ordinary invitation, which means, that if you are inclined to enter, you are sure of a welcome, whenever and wherever you see an open door. In most of the drawing-rooms there stands a piano-forte, in all of them several guitars, and never any lack of skilful hands to touch them. A guest, especially a foreigner and an Englishman, who brings his flute in his pocket and knows the art of using it, (as one of our naval party did right well,) is sure to gain rapid favour. I must state that I was not this fortunate youth; seeing that I cannot tell one note from another, though I once laboured for three months, at the rate of four hours a day, under the master of the band, but never advanced beyond the second bar of "God save the King."

There springs up an occasional dance at these evening parties, or tertulias as they are called; but no bustle or stir, nor any derangement of the ordinary establishment of the household for the accommodation of the company; all is natural and easy, without any appearance of preparation; the people go in and out, from house to house, without ceremony, like bees trying flower after flower, and sipping the sweets of each. At one house we used to find a concert, at another a waltz, at a third a country dance, which, though it bear the same title, is a very different affair from its namesake in England. The word is probably of French origin, 'contre danse,' from the parties standing opposite to one another. The Spaniards, who also call it 'contra danza,' entangle it not only with the ordinary waltzes, but with endless varieties of complicated figures, which include the whole set, in such a way, that, from top to bottom, all the party are in motion at once. These bewitching dances form a very delightful species of amusement even to persons long accustomed to them; but to us strangers, jolly young sailors, who found ourselves in their delicious whirl for the first time in our lives, they were really intoxicating.

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The news from the interior, as it arrived from day to day, produced a wonderful effect upon these singular people. The slightest touch of success carried their hopes into the clouds; and then nothing was thought of, or talked of, but the total expulsion of the intruders, and even the invasion of France. On the other hand, the most trivial check or disaster cast every one's spirits down to the ground. On the 13th of December, 1808, we first heard, at Vigo, of the retreat of the English army. Nothing could exceed the consternation of the inhabitants, except the frantic joy which, ten days afterwards, tossed them up again, when they learned the glad but false tidings of mighty victories. I find these things recorded in my letters with all the ardour of the moment, caught by an easy infection from the enthusiasm of the company amongst whom we mixed.

Accounts now poured in to Vigo from all quarters, with the happy intelligence of a long series of patriotic successes. The French, it appeared by these statements, had attacked Madrid, but totally failed; this was a clear point—nobody doubted it—and, without inquiring further, or, perhaps, having the means of making further inquiries, all the world gave themselves up to joy. The real fact, however, was, that on the 4th of December, exactly three weeks before the very time of these wild rejoicings for victory, Madrid, the capital, though well garrisoned, and equipped for an obstinate resistance, had quietly yielded to Napoleon in person.

"By a judicious mixture of force and policy," says Colonel Napier, "he obliged Madrid to surrender in two days, and thus prevented the enthusiasm which would doubtless have arisen, if the capital had been defended for any time, and the heart-burnings if it had been stormed*."

By what process the natives of the Peninsula contrive to transmute the tidings of a disgraceful defeat into those of a brilliant victory, is best known to themselves; but I defy any one who has not had long experience of their address in this political alchemy, to resist the sort of evidence by which they bolster up their mishaps, and affect to turn them to advantages. This, however, is only at a distance; for when the scene of action is close at hand, an opposite practice is followed. Whichever way it was managed, the fact is certain, that on the 24th of December, at Vigo, we were full of high hopes, in consequence of the reported great doings at Madrid. Even the very manner in which the devoted citizens had defended themselves was described in letters written from the capital. It was stated, that before the French entered the town, on the day of the attack, the inhabitants had thrown every article in their houses out of the windows—sofas and piano-fortes, pictures, kettles, and guitars; in short every moveable thing belonging to them. By means of this shower of furniture and utensils, the streets, which are said to be very narrow, were so completely barricaded, that the great Napoleon and his hitherto invincible legions, according to these veracious Spanish accounts, were at last fairly brought to a stand-still by this exquisite stratagem. The doors of the houses being locked of course, the fierce invaders were driven to their wits'-end what to do with this wide ocean of pots and pans, or how to discover a passage through the forest of beds and band-boxes which rose upon their view at every corner. The whole mass of the population, it was added, from the highest to the lowest, soon became engaged in defending the city. The women and children took a very active part, particularly the women, who were described, in several of the letters which I saw, as having fought with incredible valour and rage!

Not only was the whole of this story false, but there was not even the shadow of a shade of any circumstance to give the lie a complexion. But the result of the wonderful battle was stated circumstantially in these letters at eighteen thousand French slain in the grand square, or plaza, to which they had penetrated by climbing along the summit of the ridge formed by the chairs and tables piled in the streets. The first accounts stated the slaughter on this spot at thirty-two thousand French—not thirty, in round numbers, but exactly thirty-two thousand. The more recent statements, however, brought the slain down to the reasonable compass of eighteen thousand. This took place, it was said, in the city of Madrid itself. The remaining fourteen thousand were described as having made good their retreat beyond the walls, where, being speedily surrounded by the patriots, who had twice refused to allow their enemy to capitulate, the inhabitants were preparing to sacrifice them 'en masse' when the accounts came away.

At this distance of time, when the wild enthusiasm of the moment has evaporated, I can scarcely understand how any one could have written down and believed such preposterous absurdities. Indeed, if I had not possession of these statements in my own handwriting, taken verbatim from the narratives of the Spaniards who read me their letters from Madrid, I should hardly have ventured to trust my recollection. It is evident also from the context, that in transmitting all this to England as good news and true, nothing was farther from my thoughts than any jest. The whole of the Spanish reports of that period turned out so entirely imaginary, that the only wonder now seems, how their allies could get on at all, when the chief sources of information had been rendered so completely turbid, that no experience could possibly see much beyond the surface.

An equal liberty was taken with truth in all the Spanish reports of the operations of the English army; for I find it set forth in my letters from Vigo to England, written on the faith of official despatches received by the authorities, that Sir John Moore had unexpectedly fallen upon a body of twelve thousand French cavalry (a small detachment it was called) from the grand army, sent in pursuit of the central junta, which had fled from Madrid before the grand day of the upholstery manœuvre above described. Of course in the Spanish accounts these French troops were set down as all demolished, and, as may be supposed, to Bonaparte's great surprise.

I cannot say that we were altogether such geese as to swallow everything told us by the Dons with such exquisite gravity; but certainly we were so much borne along with the stream, that we began to lose our high opinion of the French as military men, and to consider the

* Napier's History of the Peninsular War, vol. i. p. 508.

Spaniards as the greatest warriors, the most persevering patriots, and the least jealous allies, that ever foreigners co-operated with. Alas, how soon our admiration of everything Spanish—save the black eyes of the women, and the bright sky of their atmosphere, and the delightful sound of their language, the witchery of their dances, and the tinkling of their guitars—was doomed to fade away, and how speedily the prowess of their invaders reassumed its formidable and almost matchless ascendancy!

Still, in spite of all this folly, vain-glory, and jealousy of the Spaniards, there hangs a fascination about their country, which, after a little time, is sure to surmount every cause of annoyance or doubt; and however much our hopes may at one time be crushed, the natives never fail to re-establish themselves in our regard, if they do not always secure our respect. A grave stateliness surrounds even their very falsehoods, which never look undignified; and if their good fortune in battle plants them behind a wall, they will even extort our admiration, in spite of a thousand previous failures. The Spaniards do nothing by halves; they will either fight almost till the last man is dead, as in Saragossa, for instance; or they will turn tail at the first shot, and move off in a mass. They will either tell the whole truth, or rig up such a gigantic and circumstantial fabric of lies, that we generally forget its deceit in its matchless boldness. Add to which, they really are amongst the best-bred people alive; the pleasantest folks in the world to mix with on familiar terms. They seldom either take or give offence; and in modern days, whatever it may have been of old, they are apparently as free from jealousy in their domestic habits, as if such a thing as an intrigue had never been heard of between Cadiz and Corunna. It must indeed be confessed, they are not the most energetic or punctual men of business one could wish to have dealings with; and their disposition to put off things till to-morrow is perhaps the most characteristic and universal feature in their national character. Yet, for all these, and a hundred other faults, it is quite impossible not to like them; and I have seldom, if ever, met any one that had been much in Spain, who did not express, more or less, a similar sentiment.

Our captain, being a long-sighted, experienced, and clear-headed officer, never allowed himself to be taken in by all this enthusiasm at Vigo, although the heads of his more juvenile and mercurial officers were completely turned. He made it his business to learn each morning exactly what information had been received, weighed it carefully, and, drawing his own conclusions, kept them to himself. Many a time I have wondered how it was possible for him to resist the fervent impulse of the moment; but he saw through it all, and after giving directions how we were to proceed in the event of any sudden emergency, and appointing a signal to be made for him if his presence should be required on board, set off with his gun and brace of dogs to shoot amongst the hills, only taking care to keep the mast-heads of his ship always in sight. To us, however, no spot on earth, nor any kind of sport, could have attractions superior to those by which we were drawn on shore every day. It was not till long afterwards that I learned how much more an officer in command may sometimes contrive to know of the real state of affairs by keeping out of their immediate influence, than by allowing himself to be whirled round, as we were, in the busy vortex.

But none of us was permitted to remain long in this blissful state of ignorance of the truth, or to enjoy our dancing and sporting in peace. A few days, indeed, sufficed to let the real matter of fact leak out. The Spaniards, it was soon ascertained, had been beaten at every point; Madrid had fallen an easy prey to the mighty conqueror, who was sweeping over the Peninsula like a hurricane; and the British armies, now assembled into one body, but totally unsupported by the people whom they came to assist, had found themselves obliged to retreat towards their ships. At that early stage of the Peninsular war, before the imbecility of the Spanish armies was ascertained, it appears to have formed no part of the plan of government that the English troops should contend single-handed with the French. Having been sent, therefore, merely to co-operate with the Spaniards, they felt, of course, not a little disappointed and irritated when deserted by their allies in the very outset of the campaign. This total want of support obliged the English to retreat; though, previous to the adoption of that very disagreeable measure, the intrepid general who commanded made one important movement in advance, even at the last hour, and when he knew perfectly well that eventually (indeed almost immediately) a retrograde movement was absolutely indispensable for his safety.

Sir John Moore's object in making this bold march in advance previous to his retiring, we find admirably explained in Colonel Napier's History. So far from being indiscreet or hastily resolved upon at the suggestion of rash counsellors, as many people imagined at the time, it now appears to have been the result of a sober calculation of all the chances in the extensive game of war then playing in the Peninsula.

The English general felt that, after Madrid had fallen, it was of the utmost importance to divert Napoleon's forces from the native armies in the southern parts of Spain; and he resolved, though at great risk, and much inconvenience to himself, to attract the enemy's attention towards the troops of England in the north-western corner of the country. The manœuvre completely succeeded, for Bonaparte's attack was fairly drawn away from the only portion of Spain in which there existed the smallest hopes that the inhabitants, if time were allowed them, might make any useful resistance. Everything, indeed, that Sir John Moore could possibly have expected to accomplish by his celebrated advance-movement on Sahagun was fully attained. He gave the patriotic armies, south of Madrid, time to breathe, by turning aside Napoleon's sword, then just descending upon them. If they did not choose, or had not sufficient capacity and courage to profit by the respite thus afforded them, it was not the less honourable or statesmanlike in Sir John Moore to give them such a chance for political existence. The daring enterprise alluded to (the march upon Sahagun), as it was above the common run of military incidents, had also for its purpose more extensive national results than belong to ordinary cam-

paigns. Such, at least, we know, is the opinion of the highest authorities in war upon this forward movement of the British army, undertaken after a retreat to the coast had been decided upon as absolutely necessary.

Military as well as naval men, and perhaps all classes of public servants, ought to remember that there can seldom be any merit on the grand scale without boldness, and that there is no boldness without risk of some kind. The risk which Sir John Moore so nobly incurred, and but just evaded, was no less than the total destruction of his army. It might, perhaps, be interesting, as well as instructive, to consider what would have happened had the same genius which conceived the plan not continued to direct its details. In point of fact, however, the general lost neither his army, nor a tittle of its honour, still less, in the long-run, one jot of his own reputation; and so far he may be described as having been eminently successful.

That doubts and difficulties should hang for a long period over the explanation of these things, was certainly to be expected, and they ought, I think, to have been met by his friends with more dignified calmness. It was essentially a part of the great risk which Sir John Moore, as a public man, thought it his duty to encounter, that, for a time, and possibly for ever, his own character as a soldier might suffer eclipse. With his eyes open to the whole of this great danger, he placed his army in the most perilous predicament, and along with it, in a considerable degree, the military renown of the country, and perhaps also the ultimate fate of the whole war. Assuredly, when the General fairly and gallantly looked these chances in the face, and, in spite of their threatening aspect, resolved to stand the hazard of the die, he must have been perfectly well aware that, even if he succeeded in his main object, it must necessarily be at the expense of considerable sacrifices. The value of such sacrifices, in the eyes of his countrymen at a distance, he must also have well known, would be estimated, at least in the first instance, not by the intrinsic sagacity of the measures which led to these inevitable losses, but by their eventual and possibly long-delayed benefits.

If Sir John Moore himself viewed matters in this way, as he no doubt must have done—for he possessed, in a most eminent degree, the genuine spirit of a public man—he must also have contemplated, almost as a necessary consequence, the probability of his military and political character suffering, for a time, in general estimation. If this be so, it appears evident that his defenders would be more likely to win our patient attention, and thus to regain a larger share of the public favour for this great officer's memory, by taking these allowances into account, than by omitting them.

Sir John Moore's friends, also, while they give way to their feelings of indignation, and complain of the injustice done to the general by the imputations cast upon his military and political skill, should, for his sake, be more cautious in distrusting, not only the capacity, but the motives of those persons who stood opposed to him. It must be admitted that, both at home and in the Peninsula, there were to be found men in high official stations, who appear to have understood neither the man nor his measures; yet it is by no means either fair or politic to stigmatise the hostility of these distinguished persons as personally vindictive, or, in fact, to insinuate that their opposition could have arisen from anything but a mistaken sense of public duty. Sir John Moore himself, at the moment of highest excitement, never could have suspected that such men as Mr. Canning or Mr. Frere could have any object in view but the service of their country.

The fact is now notorious, that the Spaniards did not avail themselves of the golden opportunity afforded them, to the extent, at least, that Sir John Moore was led to believe they might have done. And consequently, it was unreasonable to hope that the people of England could at once enter into the intricacies of such a discussion; and by eliminating, as the mathematicians call it, all the erroneous views, and leaving only those which were correct, arrive at once at a conclusion favourable to the general. He was, therefore, in the mean time, held responsible for the disasters of the retreat, albeit he wound it up by a splendid battle.

Sir John Moore has at length found, in Colonel Napier, an eloquent historian, and one capable of doing his memory justice; first, by pointing out the political and military motives which led to the measures so vehemently criticised; and, secondly, by showing in what manner good results did, at last, spring out of those very measures so much reprobated; and how far the ultimate fate of the Peninsula, and of Europe in general, was modified by the circumstance of Bonaparte being arrested, in the very middle of his career of Spanish conquest, by Sir John Moore's most masterly stratagem.

But the gallant and accomplished historian who has done this service to the cause of truth and military science, and thus placed the memory of a great officer on a station where it will flourish for ever, ought to consider, that, antecedent to his own luminous exposition, the world had really no adequate means of judging fairly of the case. The prejudices, therefore, which long opposed the entire re-establishment of Sir John Moore's public character appear so natural, that they might perhaps have been more completely and more readily effaced by explanations directed exclusively to that object, without including, as a part of the defence, insinuations that his accusers and other critics were influenced by unworthy motives.

Before returning from this discussion to the narrative of some of the events to which it has reference, it may not be useless to take the opportunity of adverting to a most important principle in public life, which is too often forgotten, at the right moments, by men who, knowing its truth, ought to bear it always in mind, as one to which there are very few exceptions. I feel the more anxious to put this matter in what I think its proper light, because there are many young and zealous officers extremely anxious to perform whatever they distinctly know to be their duty; yet who, from ignorance of the rule alluded to, often go astray, and sacrifice the public interest to unworthy and selfish considerations. What makes this a subject of more regret, is the certainty, that if the sources of their real duty, which in the long-run will always turn out to be those of their own true interest, had once been properly established in their minds, they would no more have flinched from discharg-

ing it correctly, through any fear of the consequences, than they would have hesitated to engage an enemy, whom it was right they should bring to action, merely because in the conflict they might perhaps lose their lives.

Every public servant, when called upon to act on any unforeseen emergency, or when thrown into situations left unprovided for by his instructions, ought to make up his mind to have his conduct judged, not always according to the aspect which things bore in his eyes at the moment he was called upon to decide, but rather according to the particular situation in which affairs seem to his employers to remain, at the moment his conduct is brought under their review. It may be said, with great truth, that in many cases this rule will press hard upon a man who has acted for the best, and who, under all the circumstances, might possibly have behaved very improperly had he adopted any other course than that for which he is eventually censured. Yet every officer who is worth his salt, as we say, will, at such periods of doubt, keep but one object in view, namely, the public service, and will never, for a single instant, admit into his calculations the probable effect which his measures may have upon himself. An officer's duty, in fact, like his allegiance to his King, is one and indivisible: it admits of no splitting or qualification; and he who allows his public conduct to be influenced in the slightest degree by its possible influence on his own fortunes, or even on his good name, acts nearly as mischievous a part, though not so guilty a one, as he who deserts his colours for those of the enemy.

What is more common, however, than to hear officers holding petulant discussions with their official employers upon the merits of operations, of which those superiors, from being themselves responsible to the country at large, are the only proper judges? Men of this litigious, self-sufficient temper should make one of two resolutions; they ought either not to take employment at all, or, if they do accept a command, they ought to acknowledge, without reserve, the full authority of their superiors. A thorough-bred, right-minded officer, indeed—that is, one whose whole heart is in his profession—will see no humiliation, but, on the contrary, the truest honour and public spirit, in being the first not only to acknowledge, but to feel, that he has been wrong, whenever such shall be the decision of the responsible and qualified authorities under whom he serves, and to whose judgment he shall have submitted all the circumstances of the case.

This unworthy and mistaken itch for justification perverts many otherwise noble spirits; it often mars some of their brightest prospects, essentially retards the public service, irritates their superiors, and in no respect benefits the inferiors; who, the more they labour to make out a case, generally sink only the lower in public opinion.

Innumerable officers, indeed, who admit in theory the necessity and great advantages of strict discipline, and of hearty as well as respectful acquiescence in the wishes of their superiors in professional rank, cannot bear the smallest touch of censure, and seem never to dream of the possibility of their being themselves in the wrong. They conveniently cease to recollect, on these particular occasions, all their fine admissions about the value of due subordination, and quite forget that it is not their duty, but that of their official employers, to say what is right and what is wrong. The moment they are visited by the slightest reprimand, or that they fail to gain all the applause they fancy they deserve, the interests of the service, at all other times deemed paramount, appear to fade before their eyes, and to become insignificant, in comparison with the mighty question, forsooth, of their being in error or not in error. This, and this alone, is what they struggle and fight for; and such is the pertinacity of your finished self-justifier, that he will weary out the patience of any superior, but those of the most resolute and stern natures. It will, of course, not infrequently happen, that these justificators have reason on their side, and that the censure of which they complain is really misapplied. What then? Is the public service to stand still till every private affair of every 'pelting petty officer' is redressed? Is the whole fabric of public discipline to be made rickety because some of its higher members happen to be over-rigid, or some of its inferior ones over-sensitive? Surely not! and therefore every good officer, when his report has once been made, ought to be prepared to take the consequences manfully, whatever they be, without entering into justifications, and without supposing it possible his motives can be questioned.

These remarks, which apply chiefly to the lower departments of the service, and to the ordinary details of duty, require considerable modification when they are brought to bear on such stupendous responsibilities as that of Sir John Moore, or any other commander-in-chief, to whom a certain latitude of free action must in all cases be given. It may, indeed, often become a General's or an Admiral's duty to the country to justify the course of his proceedings, by collecting into one statement the scattered motives of a thousand measures which conducted him to his final determination; and there can hardly be any question, that if Sir John Moore had lived, he would most promptly have done that for himself, which it has cost, perhaps necessarily, upwards of twenty years' time, and much anxious diligence on the part of his friends, to bring about, triumphantly it is true, but tardily, and in the teeth of much prejudice, and no small quantity of positive error as to many material facts, and of ignorance as to many others.

Had this consummation, however, not been accomplished, and had Sir John Moore's memory, in consequence, gone down to posterity with its lustre dimmed by a misapprehension of the merits of his last campaign, and the want of a contemporary and well-qualified chronicler of its objects, conduct, and final results; still, no right-minded officer, however well he might be aware of this signal act of injustice, ought ever to think of drawing from it any discouragement against the boldness of his own behaviour when called upon to act in similar circumstances. It is a hard position to be placed in, certainly; but, as I have repeated more than once, a public-spirited officer must be willing, at all times, to place not only his life, but also his professional character, at hazard. If he be of a different stamp of mind, and do not choose to run such fearful risk, he may be a very good, conscientious, and diligent person in his

way, but he will certainly never become a great commander.

There is a still farther and very delicate refinement wanting to complete this negative part in the definition of a perfect officer, which consists in his being ready to place even his private character in jeopardy, and sometimes to expose it almost to the certainty of misrepresentation, when the public service appears to demand so formidable a sacrifice. An honest man, on all such occasions, will ask himself but one question, What is most advantageous for the country? and he will then follow the course directed by his best judgment, without reference to any personal consequences, good or bad, to which his measures may possibly lead.

It may be added, that in moments of severe trial, men are too apt to lose sight of the vital distinction between the imputation of dishonour and its reality. But in all such cases of doubt and difficulty, the only safe rule is, to remember, that the interests of the public service, as well as those of private life, can never be advanced by the least real sacrifice of principle.

CHAPTER XXVI.

BATTLE OF CORUNNA.

As soon as Sir John Moore heard of Napoleon's march from Madrid, in the direction of Galicia, to which quarter it had been the English General's sole object to allure his enemy, he gave orders for the retreat to commence. This was at the beginning of the last week in December, 1808; and as it was then proposed that the troops should fall back upon Vigo, the transports were sent to that port from Corunna, as I have before mentioned. The convoy were afterwards joined at Vigo by a squadron of line-of-battle ships, under Sir Samuel Hood, to render the embarkation more secure.

On the 5th of January, 1809, however, Sir John Moore, who was then at Herrerias, received from his engineers such reports of the unfitness of Vigo as a place of embarkation, that he changed his line of retreat, and directed his march upon Corunna. Orders to this effect were sent ahead to Sir David Baird, the second in command, from Sir John Moore, who, it appears, "constantly directed the movements of the rear-guard himself*." These orders, after reaching Sir David, were forwarded by the hands of a private dragoon, who got drunk, and lost them on their way to General Frazer, who had already proceeded some distance on the road to Vigo. This trivial incident cost many lives, and was the cause of much delay†. I know not who had charge of the original despatches sent to the admiral at Vigo; but they never came to hand. Several precious days were thus lost, before we knew the ships would be again required at Corunna. At length, on the 9th of January, a memorandum from the commander-in-chief—a duplicate or triplicate it might be, for aught we knew—written on a drum-head, apparently in the rain, but clear, soldier-like, and to the purpose, was put into Sir Samuel Hood's hands, by an officer, half dead with fatigue and anxiety, who had found his way, on horseback, from the British head-quarters to Vigo, across the wild mountains of Galicia.

The wind blew dead in from the south, and so hard, that not one of the transports could be moved. The brief despatch from the army, however, was scarcely half read through, before the signal 'to weigh' was made from the Barfleur; and in less than half an hour the men-of-war were under sail, and working out to sea, under close-reefed topsails and courses. I think they all got out; and when once round the point, the wind being fair to Corunna, away they dashed, with a flowing sheet, to tell we were coming after them as fast as we could, with our flock of three hundred transports.

On the 11th of January, the wind lulled a little, and, by dint of whip and spur, we got our immense fleet fairly under weigh. By good fortune, too, we were enabled to work out of the Bay of Vigo, and afterwards to carry the wind with us all the way to Corunna, where we arrived on the morning of the 15th of January, surrounded by upwards of two hundred and fifty sail of ships. On the previous evening, the 14th of January, many of the fastest-sailing vessels of the convoy had entered the harbour of Corunna, where the squadron of men-of-war under Sir Samuel Hood had already arrived. The dismounted cavalry, the sick, some of the horses, and fifty-two pieces of artillery, were embarked during the night.

I have often since heard officers who were then with the army, in position along the ridge, just above where the battle was fought, describe the feelings with which they turned round to look at the ships crowding into the harbour, under all sail, right before the wind. The sight gave fresh spirits and confidence to the soldiers, of which, poor fellows, they stood in some need; for on their first arrival at Corunna, on the 11th of January, not a single ship had made her appearance.

"As the troops approached Corunna," says Colonel Napier, "the General's looks were directed towards the harbour; an open expanse of water painfully convinced him that to fortune at least he was no way beholden. Contrary winds detained the fleet at Vigo; and the last consuming exertion made by the army was thus rendered fruitless.

"The men," he continues, "were now put into quarters, and their leader awaited the progress of events. Three divisions occupied the town and suburbs; the reserve was posted with its left at El Burgo, and its right on the road of St. Jago de Compostella. For twelve days these hardy soldiers had covered the retreat, during which time they had traversed eighty miles of road in two marches, passed several nights under arms in the snow of the mountains, were seven times engaged with the enemy; and they now assembled at the outposts, having fewer men missing from their ranks (including those who had fallen in battle) than any other division in the army; an admirable instance of the value of good discipline, and a manifest proof of the malignant injustice with which Sir John Moore has been accused of precipitating his retreat beyond the measure of human strength‡."

In the mean time, the enemy, treading closely on the heels of the English army, though not much less grievously fatigued, came gradually up, and, on the very day we arrived in the bay, "occupied the

* Napier, vol. i. p. 478. † Ibid. p. 479. ‡ Napier, vol. i. p. 488.

great ridge enclosing the British position, placing their right on the intersection of the roads leading from St. Jago and Betanzos, and their left upon a rocky eminence which overlooked both lines*."

Had the transports arrived a few days sooner, the whole army might have been embarked with perfect ease and safety, and thus all the objects of Sir John Moore's operations would have been accomplished. His force was decidedly too small, considering the ruined state of the Spanish troops, and other circumstances in the political history of the country, to hold out any reasonable hope of coping with the grand army of Napoleon, now directed expressly against the British. Had the Admiral at Vigo received Sir John Moore's first despatch in proper time, the transports and the line-of-battle ships might undoubtedly have reached Corunna soon enough to have taken the troops on board without the loss of a single man. With a force thus unbroken, a series of ulterior operations contemplated by Sir John Moore might then have been put in execution.

"The English General," says Colonel Napier, "had hoped that by a quick retreat he might reach his ships unmolested, embark, and carrying his army from the narrow corner in which it was cooped, to the southern provinces, establish there a good base of operations, and renew the war under favourable circumstances. It was by this combination of a fleet and army that the greatest assistance could be given to Spain, and the strength of England become most formidable. A few days of sailing might carry the troops to Cadiz; but six weeks' constant marching would not bring the French army from Galicia to that neighbourhood. The southern provinces had scarcely seen an enemy: they were rich and fertile; and there also was the seat of government. Sir John Moore reckoned thus, and resolved to fall down to the coast and embark with as little loss or delay as might be†."

It affords a mortifying, but an instructive lesson to recollect, that this plan, so admirable in itself, and so very nearly being accomplished, was in all probability frustrated, not by any great political or military event, but by the accidental interruption of the messengers sent across the country. If the General's despatches about the removal of the fleet had arrived a few days sooner, the lives of so many brave men who died at Corunna, including their great chief, might all have been spared, while their strength and valour might afterwards have been employed on more substantial objects than fighting for the mere maintenance of the ground on which they stood.

In consequence of this delay, a battle appears to have become indispensable, or nearly so, to the safety of the army. "The late arrival of the transports, the increasing force of the enemy, and the disadvantageous nature of the ground, augmented the difficulty and danger of the embarkation so much, that several general officers proposed to the commander-in-chief that he should negotiate for leave to retire to the ships upon terms. There was little chance of such a proposal being agreed to by the enemy, and there was no reason to try. The army had suffered, but not from defeat; its situation was dangerous, but far from desperate; and the General would not consent to remove the stamp of energy and prudence which marked his retreat, by a negotiation which would have given an appearance of timidity and indecision to his previous operations, as opposite to their real character as light is to darkness. His high spirit and clear judgment revolted at the idea, and he rejected the degrading advice without hesitation‡."

As we sailed into the harbour of Corunna, on the morning of the 15th of January, we distinctly made out with our glasses the two lines of troops; for although the ridge upon which the English were posted lay nearer to the sea, it was of such inconsiderable height, compared with that occupied by the French, that we could discover the army of the enemy, mustering thick along the sky-line, and overlooking ours in a very ominous and threatening manner. Towards evening there occurred some skirmishing of a trivial nature on the right of our line, part of which we distinguished from the mast-heads of the frigate.

Several horsemen were now seen galloping up the bank which faced us till they reached the crown of the ridge, and then darting out of sight on the other side, where, from the quick firing of artillery, there appeared to be some smart work going on. By-and-by, also, we discovered a cloud o smoke curling high into the air above both ranges of hills, just beyond the spot where the cavalry had been lost sight of. We of course busied ourselves in vain surmises as to what was passing in the valley beyond the ridge; for we naturally expected that a general action would spring out of this brush. To our great disappointment, however, the firing gradually subsided; and our only chance, as we then believed, of seeing a land-fight was gone.

These were the first shots we had heard fired in anger, as it is technically called, during the campaign; but the scene had likewise another and very strong interest for us, from its being placed in such contrast with all we had been seeing and hearing for the two previous months. Here, at Corunna, instead of listening to a set of boastful Spaniards, fighting with the air, and vapouring from morning to night about their own prowess, we beheld the actual tug of war between Greek and Greek. The master-spirits of the earth were at last met, hand to hand, to fight it out. Nor could I help looking back to the solitude and tranquillity of the ground before me when I last had seen it. Now it was covered thick with armed men; but only a few weeks before, I had rambled over these ridges, accompanied by a single Spanish peasant, whose whole conversation turned on the facility with which his countrymen could thrust all these French out of the country. During a long morning's walk we had met only half-a-dozen people; and little did I then expect to see the time when an army of some twenty thousand British troops should hardly be able to maintain their own against these very invaders, whom it was the fashion to hold so cheap.

When the night fell, a double row of fires along the summits of the two hills pointed out, in a very striking manner, the position of the rival hosts; and although the distance was too great for us actually to hear the 'hum of either army,' the imagination was set finely to work to conjecture what thoughts were passing in the breast of each. The night proved very dark; and as fresh fuel

* Napier, vol. i. p. 492. † Ibid. 475. ‡ Napier, vol i. p. 492.

was piled on the fires, they became obscured for a moment, or rose into a sudden blaze on being stirred up by the groups of soldiers, whom we saw, or fancied we saw, standing between us and the light. These gigantic figures might probably be the men stationed to feed the flames; for we may well suppose the great body of the troops on both sides were but too glad to have a full night's repose. Our soldiers, indeed, had been amply supplied, since reaching the coast, with new shoes, great-coats, and many other articles of dress, from the stores at Corunna; and were thus in a better condition than their enemies to profit by this interval of rest—to so many on both sides, the last they enjoyed on earth. Some of these exhausted warriors, we may suppose, dreamed of the next day's battle; for it was probably apparent to the officers, and to the experienced amongst the men, that Soult, with whom they had already joined in many a severe fight, would never allow his old antagonists to embark in peace and quiet. It is said that people, on the eve of an action, generally dream they are killed. I have no experience to offer on the point; for though I witnessed the furious contest of next day, I had no expectation at that time of being able to leave the ship. In fact, I did not sleep at all, being employed nearly the whole night in the ship's boats, embarking what are called the encumbrances of the army, consisting of the remainder of the baggage which the retreat had left them, some wounded and sick men, and a few guns and horses. In this curious assembly I observed several women, who, strange to say, had gone through the whole campaign, unbroken in spirit, and apparently not much fatigued. They even talked as if they had done no great things. We were much amused likewise by seeing an officer's servant with a huge violoncello under his charge, which he told us had accompanied his master all through the country from Lisbon.

It will easily be supposed that our curiosity to have a sight of the ground, and to talk with the soldiers on the field, was very great. We had small hopes, however, of being allowed to leave the ship at such a time; and I can never cease to feel grateful for the kindness of the captain, who allowed Mr. Oughton the purser, and myself, to go on shore. We were personally acquainted with several of the officers in the army, whom we hoped to find on the ground; but could scarcely believe in the reality of our good fortune till we had fairly left the boat, and pushed our way through the town (which was in a shocking state of disorder), and found ourselves on the great Madrid road, which cut across the positions of both armies nearly at right angles.

As the morning turned out fine, the whole scene looked highly picturesque, and, though painful in many respects, it possessed an uncommon degree of interest. I need hardly mention, that there was none of the show and flourish of a review to be seen here; for the soldiers lay scattered about, wearied and dispirited, ragged in their dress, and many of them sickly, or rather broken down in appearance, by the fatigues of this celebrated retreat. Most of their chins had been untouched by a razor for some days, perhaps weeks, while their hands and faces, being rather less familiar with soap and water than with the smoke of their muskets and the charcoal of their cooking fires, gave evidence enough of the want of comforts to which the army had been so long exposed. The muskets of the troops stood in pyramids piled along the ridge amongst the men stretched out on the ground fast asleep—not in any very precise order, but keeping within a few yards of one another on the summit line of the position. I observed many of these hardy fellows lying on their backs, with their hands under their heads, and faces half covered by what remained of a hat, becoming still more deeply tanned in the sun. Many, however, were sitting on the grass, or on the loose blocks of granite strewed over the ground, and gazing every now and then in silence, with very wistful eyes towards the ships.

Along the whole line of troops, however, I observed only one or two of the officers asleep. Generally speaking, they collected themselves into little knots, looking about them, but seldom speaking. In fact, one of the things which struck me most, was the profound, almost melancholy silence that prevailed amongst so many thousands of men. As our spirits were not weighed down by any of the depressing causes which affected these gentlemen, we talked away merrily to the officers; but, in most cases, were disappointed to find so little animation among them. We forgot how differently from our own their lives had lately been spent. For our parts, we had been amusing ourselves in ease and in comfort, doing everything we could to fill our imaginations with visions of Spanish patriotism, national sacrifices, and individual exertion, without having actually seen or heard anything to show how frothy all this was. The army, on the other hand, had been marching, fighting, and starving, almost without intermission, since the day on which they landed, two months before. The Spaniards, their nominal allies, had gone off to the right-about at the first charge of French bayonets. The whole country through which the English troops had retreated proved the very reverse of friendly; the season also being rigorous, the labours of the soldiers became hopeless, severe, and incessant. Was it, therefore, surprising, that what is called enthusiasm became at length an article hardly to be found at all in the English camp?

Our morning's excursion commenced nearly at the left of the British position, in the midst of Sir John Hope's division; then, turning to the right-hand, we threaded our way amongst the sleeping soldiers, piled muskets, and camp equipage, along the whole line, till the ridge upon which the army was in position gradually lost itself in the valley, just opposite a high rocky knoll, forming the extreme left of the ground similarly occupied by the French. The 95th, the well-known Rifle corps, were stationed hereabouts; and I was happy to meet an old friend alive and merry amongst the officers of this regiment. These gentlemen appeared in greater spirits than most of the others with whom we had conversed. We were surprised, indeed, to find them laughing heartily; and, upon asking the cause of their mirth, were shown a good-sized pig, which the regimental cooks were busily cutting up for a dinner ordered to be got ready in a few minutes. It seems this unfortunate grunter had been disturbed by the French pickets near the village of Elvina, just in front of the spot where the 95th were stationed. He had made

good his retreat, as he thought, but fell right upon our friends the sharpshooters, who in a trice charged and despatched him with their swords and bayonets. These merry soldiers, delighted with their good luck, pressed us much to stay and partake of their windfall; but we wished to retrace our steps along a part of the line, so as to gain the road to Corunna, and return on board before sunset, as we had been ordered.

On asking them what chance there was of our seeing a battle, the officers shrugged their shoulders, and said they had already had quite enough of that work. There could be no earthly advantage gained, they added, even by victory; while a reverse must inevitably be a very serious, perhaps desperate affair, at this stage of the campaign. "They had but one wish, which was, to get snugly on board the ships, and be carried off from such a rascally country, and such a dastardly, procrastinating, pompous set of useless allies as the Spaniards."

"Nevertheless," we remarked, "you would, no doubt, make a good figure in action still, if you were put to your mettle?"

"I don't know that," said one of them; "look at the men, they are all worn out, and disheartened; if they are not sleeping, or eating whatever they can get hold of, they are gazing at the vessels, and thinking only of home. Like us, indeed, they are wishing for anything but an attack from those confounded fellows over the way."

Upon this we parted; they to their welcome dinner, while we retraced our steps amongst the weary soldiers, who certainly did look in such a miserable plight, that it seemed as if the enemy would have little more to do than gallop across the valley and catch them all napping.

Colonel Napier, however, remarks, cleverly enough, in his account of this campaign, that, "although a British army may be gleaned in a retreat, it cannot be reaped:" and of this truth abundant proofs were furnished within a few minutes after the wretched appearance of the troops had drawn from us such disparaging reflections. I had but just asked the commanding officer of one of the regiments, I forget which, near the top of the position, "Whether he thought anything could possibly rouse the men up?" In reply, he said, with a very expressive smile, and a slight nod of his head, implying that even then he suspected what was about to take place, "You'll see by-and-by, sir, if the French there choose to come over."

These words had hardly been uttered, when a movement along the whole enemy's line became apparent even to our inexperienced eyes. Almost at the instant when this stir was observed, a furious cannonading opened from a battery mounting eleven guns (eight and twelve pounders), of the existence of which, I believe, no person on our side had previously the smallest suspicion, so completely, up to this moment, had it been masked. This formidable battery, which overhung the right of the English position, was so skilfully placed, that it raked nearly the half of the British line, and, of course, galled the troops excessively. Had we remained to share the pic-nic with our friends of the 95th, we must have partaken, close at hand, of the first salvo of round and grape from these French guns, and, in all probability, the story of this great battle might never have fallen into naval hands.

The effect of these characteristic preparatory notes of war, thundering over the line, was extremely curious. At the first discharge from the French battery, the whole body of the British troops, from one end of the position to the other, started on their feet, snatched up their arms, and formed in line with as much regularity and apparent coolness as if they had been exercising on the parade in Hyde Park. I really could scarcely believe my eyes when I beheld these men spring from the ground, as if touched by a magic wand, full of life and vigour, though but one minute before they had all been stretched out listlessly in the sun. I have already noticed the silence which reigned over the field; now, however, there could be heard a loud hum, and occasionally a jolly shout, and many a peal of laughter, along a distance of nearly a mile. In the midst of these sounds, the peculiar sharp 'click-click-click' of fixing bayonets fell distinctly on the ear very ominously.

Many thousand stand of new arms had been issued to the troops from the stores at Corunna; and I could observe the men rapping the flints, tightening the screws, and tossing about their firelocks, with the air of veteran sportsmen eager to try their new pieces. The officers, who up to this moment had seemed so languid, might be seen everywhere brushing along the line, speaking to the sergeants, and making arrangements, which we did not pretend to understand. Aides-de-camp galloped past us, dropping their orders into the ears of the commanding officers of the different corps, as they moved swiftly along the position.

Not a single face could now be seen turning towards the ships, and we found it difficult to obtain an answer to any of our questions. All had become animation and cheerfulness, over minds from which, but a short time before, it seemed as if every particle of spirit had fled. There appeared to be much conversation going on, and not a little jesting amongst the men, while they braced themselves up, buckled on their knapsacks, and made various other arrangements, preparatory to the hard work they foresaw they would have to perform before the night fell. Their kits, or stock of clothes (none of them very large), being soon placed on their shoulders, the army, in a few minutes, stood perfectly ready to meet that of the enemy, whose troops, in three immense close columns, by this time were pelting rapidly down the side of the opposite heights.

I have no precise notion how many men might be in each of these square, solid masses—I think I have heard it stated at six or seven thousand. They kept themselves steadily together, looked as dark as the blackest thunder-cloud, and, I must say, their appearance, on the whole, was the most imposing and formidable thing I recollect to have seen, either before or since.

As there could be mustered on the English side only a dozen small guns, our artillery made but a feeble return to the fierce attack of the enemy's great raking battery, which continued to tear open the English ranks in dreadful style. Presently, however, the two armies became so completely intermixed in personal conflict, that the enemy's cannon-shot could no longer be directed with certainty against their antagonists, without an equal chance of hitting their friends, and they ceased to fire at the troops.

When it was found, at the commencement of the action, that the English guns could make no serious impression on the heavy artillery of the battery, they had been turned upon the huge French columns, which, by this time, had reached the level space, less than a mile in width, lying between the bases of the two ranges of hills. The round and grape with which the enemy's columns were thus saluted, as they came across the valley, in some degree avenged the havoc wrought on the right, and part of the centre of our line, by the raking broadsides of the battery so often alluded to.

Mr. Oughton and I stood near the centre of the position when the battle commenced; but as the ground thereabouts was rather flat, we found it difficult to see well into the valley; we therefore climbed an abrupt rising ground on the left, on which two or three regiments were posted, as we thought, in reserve. I see no mention, however, of these corps in the accounts of the battle; and I presume they must have belonged to the main line. About half-way up this rising ground, but rather lower than the spot where these troops had been stationed, stood three English field-pieces. These guns worked away briskly at the French columns, as soon as the enemy came within range of shot, and they still fired at the rear of the three great masses, the heads of which by this time had actually mingled in the plain with the British troops in and round the village of Elvina.

The intermixture of the combatants on this day was probably rendered greater than usual in consequence of the peculiar nature of the ground. It could hardly be called a plain, for it was crossed in all directions by roads cut into the earth like deep trenches, eight or ten feet below the surface; while on the ground above lay a complete network of walls, hedges, and rows of olive-trees and aloes, of such intricacy, that I should imagine it nearly impossible to have formed fifty men abreast anywhere. Thus, each corn-field, or little patch of garden-ground, became the scene of a separate fight.

We were quite near enough to see the soldiers scrambling over the walls, and meeting one another in these open spaces, or amongst the trees; while the smoke and the flashes of musketry from the hollow roads showed that a subterranean sort of warfare was going on at the same time. To us the field of battle certainly looked as complete a scene of confusion as anything could possibly be; and I suppose it must have presented nearly a similar aspect even to the more practised observation of the commander of the destructive French battery on our right; for about the period I speak of, as I have already stated, he ceased firing at the troops, and turned all his attention towards the few English field-pieces.

Heretofore we had been viewing the fray from a gentle slope, several hundred yards in front of these English guns; but so considerably below them in level, that their shot passed far over our heads. When this great flanking battery, however, set seriously about silencing the fire of our artillery, which, as I have mentioned before, kept playing away upon those parts of the French columns not yet mingled with their antagonists, our position, as mere spectators, became rather an unpleasant one. The small six-pound shot of the English field-pieces had whistled over us merrily enough; but when the heavy metal of the enemy came spinning and screaming about our ears, the story told quite differently. Some of these balls went completely over the English guns, grazed the crest of the ridge, and, falling on the high road, rolled down the other side of the hill half-way to Corunna. Several of them hit our guns, and made a fine scatter amongst the artillerymen; while every shot that fell short came plump into the little hollow space where we nautical men had established ourselves, and from which we had proposed to view the battle at our ease, as if it had merely been a panoramic representation of war, instead of one of the severest struggles in which two angry nations had ever been engaged.

The purser and I now held a counsel of war, and the proverbial result of such deliberations followed. We agreed unanimously, that, under existing circumstances, a retreat was the proper measure. The French gunners, as if to quicken our prudent resolution, just at that moment pitched a shot so critically, that it fell between the two amateurs, and threw the dirt and stones quite over us. The feeling produced on both our minds by this broad hint, was, that the shot must have been aimed expressly at us; but although this was probably not the case, we took the warning in good part, and moved off towards a rising ground still farther to the left, and two or three hundred yards out of the direct line of fire.

Here we enjoyed the additional advantage of making acquaintance with the colonel and the other officers of one of the regiments of the reserve. The colonel, whose name I do not recollect, held a pocket spy-glass in his hand, and very kindly described to us the nature of the different movements as they took place. By this time the centre, and a portion of the left of the English line, gradually became engaged in the valley; but the severest fighting of all appeared at the village of Elvina, which we could easily distinguish was sometimes in possession of one party, sometimes of the other. The uncertainty, indeed, of what was going on became greatly augmented by the broken nature of the ground, which, I suppose, prevented any manœuvre on the grand scale; but this circumstance may probably have taken nothing from the fierceness of those mortal struggles, which we could discover, from time to time, in the open spaces, when a puff of wind blew the smoke on one side.

The road leading into Corunna, and lying between us and the severest part of the action, passed at no great distance, and was soon covered along its whole length with wounded men; some of whom were walking alone, some supported by their comrades less severely hurt, and a good many had been placed in carts. We observed Sir David Baird led or carried off the field; but from the smoke and dust we could not exactly make out which, though I think he was walking. Shortly afterwards another and a larger group passed near us, bearing along a wounded officer. It was evident, from the appearance which this second party presented, that some person of consequence was under their charge; and while we were trying to discover who it could possibly be that engaged so much attention, an officer rode up the hill. After

he had delivered his message, he pointed to the party which had just gone by, and told us, that in the centre was carried along their brave commander-in-chief, Sir John Moore, who, a few minutes before, had been struck off his horse by a cannon-shot.

The command now devolved upon Sir John Hope, whom we could readily distinguish, from his being surrounded not only by his own staff, but by the aides-de-camp of his two wounded senior officers.

I shall not seek to describe how greatly the interest of this scene, so new to us in all its parts, and so remarkable in itself, was heightened by these proofs of the serious nature of the conflict. The colonel of the regiment along with which we had taken up our station, had just said to us, "Well, gentlemen, I don't know how you get on at sea, but I certainly never saw on land a hotter fire than this;" when a breathless messenger came galloping up, with orders to carry his brigade as smartly as he possibly could down to the right, to support some regiments which he described as being severely pressed in that quarter. In a few minutes we found ourselves quite alone, on the summit of the ridge, watching with a painful degree of interest the movements of our newly-made and newly-lost acquaintances, who trotted off, at double-quick time, right down the hill, and ere long were lost sight of in the thick of the action. So completely, indeed, were they enveloped in smoke and dust, that we could only distinguish their presence by the movement in advance of the British line, which took place on the right almost immediately after their arrival.

The battle, which had commenced nearly at the foot of the English hill, had gradually, though not without several fluctuations, moved itself forward towards the French side of the valley; and the much-contested village of Elvina remained finally in our possession.

I believe I am not strictly correct in saying that this village was opposite to the right of the British army, though it was not far from that portion of the position which rested on the elevated ground. We could observe some smart fighting still farther to the right, beyond the termination of the ridge, between the English reserve and the French cavalry. But of this I can record nothing with confidence, because the scene of action lay too far off for us to see distinctly, or even to guess what they were about. I remember, however, hearing one of the officers of the regiment with whom we were conversing, say that the British troops would be in rather an awkward scrape if the enemy should succeed in turning our right, and afterwards push themselves down the valley, so as to take up a position between Corunna and the English army. Instead of this happening, the left of the French was fortunately repulsed, and even driven considerably back, though I believe it was never fairly turned.

As the battle did not commence till between two and three o'clock in the afternoon, and was very obstinately contested on both sides, no great time was allowed, before the night set in, for those important manœuvres which form so much of the interest of battles. All was sheer hard fighting. The eventual advantage, however, remained manifestly on the side of the English; for it became easy to distinguish towards the end of the day, that the struggle was carried on at a position removed considerably in advance of that on which the English had stood when first attacked. What might have been the result if the ground had been clear of hedges, ditches, walls, and deep roads, I cannot pretend to say; but it struck me at the time, when looking down with a sort of bird's-eye view on the battle, that, cut up as the ground was, there could be little communication to the right and left between the different bodies of fighting men, and consequently that each regiment or mass must have acted very much for itself; somewhat in the way ships of war manage in a general action. Cavalry, I imagine, could not have been brought into play on such ground; and, indeed, there were no horses in the battle, on our side at least, except those of the field-officers and their aides-de-camp.

What I regretted most, was not seeing the French battery taken; and, from Colonel Napier's account, it appears, that if General Fraser's division had been brought into action along with the reserve at the close of the day, this purpose might have been accomplished; after which the enemy could hardly have escaped a signal overthrow*.

It must have cost Sir John Hope a great effort of military self-denial to have resisted such a temptation; "but, on the other hand," observes the judicious historian, "*to* continue the action in the dark was to tempt fortune; for the enemy were still the most numerous, and their ground was strong. The disorder the French were in offered such a favourable opportunity to get on board the ships, that Sir John Hope, upon whom the command of the army had devolved, satisfied with having repulsed the attack, judged it more prudent to pursue the original plan of embarking during the night; and this operation was effected without delay, the arrangements being so complete that neither confusion nor difficulty occurred†."

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE EVENING AFTER THE BATTLE.

UNFORTUNATELY, we could not remain till the very last upon our elevated look-out station, from whence we had commanded so complete a view of this hard-fought field, being obliged to come down shortly after sunset, that we might get on board, if possible, before dark. We took the shortest way from the top of the hill by a little footpath, leading along a steep bank, till we gained the great Corunna high road. By this time the whole space between the field of battle and the town had become pretty well crowded with wounded men, mingled with stragglers of all kinds, wending their way, as well as they might, towards the point of embarkation.

The first person we met, on coming to the road, was an elderly officer, I think of the 50th regiment, partly supported by a private soldier, and partly leaning on his sword. We helped him to gain a seat near the door of a little cottage, which we could see had been used as a temporary hospital, from the numerous wounded, dead, and dying men stretched all round it. This situation being on the face of the hill next the town, had not been exposed to the direct fire of the enemy, while the chance

* Napier, vol. i. p. 498. † Ibid.

of any stray shots plunging into it, over the top of the ridge, seemed not great.

The old officer's face soon turned so pale, that a streak of blood flowing along his brow and cheek, though not broader than a thread, appeared as conspicuous as if it had been a line drawn on a sheet of paper. That he had received a serious wound, was evident; but we had not the least idea he was dying.

"I should like the doctor to look at my head," he said; and in a minute or two the surgeon came from the cottage. He took off the officer's cap, cut away some of the hair, looked closely at the wound, and then paused.

"Well—sir—what—say—you?" asked the wounded man, whose words dropped slowly and laboriously from his lips.

"This is no time to trifle, sir," replied the surgeon, for whom a dozen miserable sufferers were calling out; "and I am sorry to tell you this wound is mortal. It is my duty to say that you have but a short time to live!"

"Indeed! I feared so," groaned the poor man. "And yet," he sighed, "I should like very much to live a little longer, if it were possible."

He spoke no more, but laid his sword on a large stone by his side, as gently as if its steel had been turned to glass, and that he was fearful of breaking it. What he meant by this action, we knew not; for he sunk dead upon the grass almost immediately afterwards.

On regaining the road, we were loudly appealed to by so many voices of men suffering from their wounds, and in despair of ever reaching the boats, that we knew not which way to turn, or what to do. At first we gave our arms to those nearest us who could walk; but on these wretched men failing, and others struggling to gain our assistance, it became quite evident that we should never reach the shore if we did not close our ears to these supplications. In fact, we had almost resolved, hard-hearted as it may seem, to walk along as fast as we could, without heeding the wounded and dying, when a number of artillery waggons, sent out from the city, came galloping along, with orders to glean up all the sufferers who could not readily find their way alone.

As we came nearer to Corunna, we found this precaution had already been taken, so that such of the wounded people as we now fell in with on foot (and these were many hundreds), were trudging on, I can hardly call it merrily, but with a degree of animation, which, considering the frightful predicament of many of them, was truly wonderful. Generally speaking, indeed, the soldiers displayed a great degree of fortitude. We passed a cart filled with men, none of whom uttered a complaint, though I could observe more than one stream of blood trickling on the road through the openings between the planks.

Hardly any trace of twilight remained when we entered the town; but, in consequence of orders given to illuminate the houses in the streets leading to the places of embarkation, no difficulty arose in marching the troops to the boats; an operation which, for obvious reasons, was purposely delayed till after it became quite dark.

When the action was over, and the army withdrawn to the position they had occupied in the morning, every demonstration was made of an intention to retain possession of the ground. In this view, large fires were kindled along the line, and these being kept up during the whole night, effectually deceived the enemy, and gave time for the different corps not only to retire at leisure in good order, but to embark almost as regularly as if nothing had happened. Such is the effect of discipline well understood.

These troops, apparently broken down in spirits, and well nigh worn out with bodily fatigue and numberless privations, had been suddenly called upon to mix in hot fight with a powerful enemy; and then, at the close of the day, after repulsing their assailants, instead of being allowed to repose, were required to march at once to the beach for embarkation. Yet, strange to say, they executed this service in as regular order as if they had been filing off a parade,

Each soldier having taken his place in the boats, was rowed on board the particular ship destined to receive him. It may not be uninteresting to mention, that, on visiting the field before the battle, we found the officers of each regiment in posssesion of the tickets, specifying the name and number of the transport in which their corps was to be embarked. Accordingly, when the troops marched into Corunna, in the middle of the night, they proceeded without any halt, straight to the shore, where they found the men-of-war's barges and launches, and the flat-bottomed boats of the transports, all ranged in order ready to receive them. As soon as it was known what regiment was approaching, a certain number of the boats were brought to the edge of the beach, when, without noise or confusion, the soldiers stepped in, and the word being given to shove off, in half an hour the empty boats rowed back again to the point of embarkation, having deposited these gallant freights in their respective vessels. Happy enough, we may well believe, they must have been to find rest for their wearied feet at last.

The loss of our great commander-in-chief, however, added much to the gloom which, in spite of the success attending the contest of the day, hung on every one's mind. A retreat, and a night embarkation, must be unpleasant circumstances at any time; but I must say, that nothing during the whole of these memorable scenes excited my admiration more than the cheerfulness with which the harassed soldiers bore so many inevitable but trying humiliations. Their gallant bearing in the morning, when assailed by the formidable columns of the enemy, was certainly very brilliant; and still more admirable did their courage appear, when standing inactive, while their ranks were ploughed up by the French battery so often mentioned. Although nothing could well be more striking than their unflinching steadiness under such trials, I am not sure if their genuine stamina, and merit as soldiers, were not fully as much evinced in their subsequent orderly demeanour, when the excitement of action was past, and when the darkness rendered it easy for any man to straggle, without the possibility of detection. The true spirit of discipline, which teaches men to do right because it is right, then came into useful play. Each man knew his duty, and wished to perform it, consequently the whole body (some fifteen or twenty thousand in number) marched from the field to the boats almost with the regu-

larity of a corporal's guard going its rounds. Who shall say, that a retreat, which left the troops in condition to fight such a battle, and to preserve such order afterwards, was not a successful military operation?

The details of Sir John Moore's death are now so well known that they need not be repeated here; but at the time I am speaking of, being new to every one, they produced a great effect.

During the whole night after the battle, while the troops were embarking, and in the early part of which their late commander's body was consigned to its truly military grave, his dying remark, that he had always wished to end his days thus, his exultation at the success of his last engagement, and his satisfaction at the conduct of the soldiers, passed eagerly from mouth to mouth. Such, indeed, is the influence of authority, that these expressions appeared to the army an ample recompense for all the hardships they had endured on this memorable retreat, so mournfully, but, at the same time, so gloriously ended.*

The embarkation of the troops had not entirely ended when the day broke on the morning of the 17th of January; and had not Corunna been a fortified place, the enemy might have rushed on, and greatly harassed, if not cut off the rear. As it was, the pickets and other detachments from the different corps left to keep the fires lighted, had to scamper for it briskly enough. But the French cavalry having pushed forward at the first peep of dawn, to ascertain what was the situation of affairs, found the bird flown, the camp empty, and only a long line of well-heaped fires remaining to show the diligence of the last lingerers on the field. The enemy put spurs to their horses as soon as they ascertained that the troops had gone.

On galloping briskly over the ridge, however, they had the mortification to see the last of the retiring pickets crowding into the gates of Corunna, under cover of the guns of the fort. The walls were manned partly by the rear-guard of the British army, and partly by the Spaniards, who behaved upon this occasion with a degree of steadiness in the cause of their allies which deserves particular mention, as it was almost the only instance in which the English forces had been effectually seconded by the people they came to assist. The baffled troops of the French pulled up their horses on coming within range of the grape and canister shot from the works; and thus terminated the second campaign of the great Peninsular war.

Shortly afterwards we could distinguish from the boats, as we passed to and from the shore to the transports, the heads of the enemy's columns showing themselves, one by one, over the tops of the ridge on which the English had been posted; and presently the whole of that part of the ground which faced the harbour was speckled with French troops. In the course of the day also, we could distinctly hear the drums of the different regiments as they came down the hill; and this reminds me, that during the whole morning of the previous day, before the battle, we heard the enemy's bands of music playing at different places along the top of their position, which, as I have said before, overlooked the comparatively low ground where the British were posted.

Our army was not in so showy a condition; for I almost question if there could have been found a clarinet or a bassoon in the whole line. There were plenty of newly-supplied drums, indeed, whose clean parchment heads and shining sides made the tattered dresses and chafed accoutrements of the soldiers, in every other department of their equipment, only the more conspicuous. I well remember also the animating rattle made by some forty or fifty of these drums stationed along the British line, when the fierce and reiterated salvos of the French battery first roused up the troops and made them stand to their arms. There was something uncommonly striking in listening at such a moment to sounds which we had been accustomed, time out of mind, to associate with mere reviews and parades, but which were now addressed to men engaged in real action, perhaps for the last time.

As the French approached Corunna, they were not slack in bringing up those heavy guns which had harassed our position in such style the day before, and trying their efficacy on the ships. It was playing at long bowls indeed; for the point to which the guns were brought must have been more than a mile off, and, being much elevated above the sea, the balls plunged at random amongst the fleet of transports. Had the battery been placed low down on the beach, and the shot been

* The following communication from my friend, Lieutenant Beatson of the Royal Engineers, will be read with much interest:—

"All who are at all conversant with the more remarkable events which attended the earlier struggles in the Peninsula, have heard of the noble and generous intention of Marshal Soult to erect a monument to the memory of his unfortunate rival, the gallant Sir John Moore, on the spot where he fell: but it is less generally known that the evacuation of Corunna by the French shortly afterwards, prevented Soult from realizing this chivalrous intention.

"The monument which records the hero's fate, and, I was told, covers his remains, was erected by the *British Government* 15 or 16 years ago; and stands within a semicircular projection (70 or 80 yards in diameter) of the ramparts of the old town of Corunna,—not far from the small fortified island at the entrance of the harbour,—and facing the scene of the memorable battle.

"Actuated by a feeling of gratitude towards a people to whom he felt indebted for many acts of kindness, as well as by admiration of, and sympathy for the gallant Moore, the late Governor, who had resided several years in England, immediately on assuming the command caused this space to be tastefully laid out as a shrubbery, with turf seats, not unlike graves, here and there; and continued to bestow on it the utmost care, until his removal to a distant province.

"I visited the spot in the spring of 1839, when it was evident that some guardian angel still watched over the hallowed scene, for nothing could exceed the air of neatness which it bore. This was the more striking, and doubly gratifying to British feelings, when contrasted with the neglected appearance and want of cleanliness of the town in general, and especially of the neighbouring parts.

"The monument itself is of freestone, of the ordinary scarcophagus form, and not remarkable for its size; it is surrounded by an iron railing, beyond which there is a low wooden paling. The inscription, on a slab of white marble, is concise and simple, well befitting the tomb of him, of whom it has with truth been remarked that, 'If glory be a distinction for such a man, death is no leveller.' It runs thus:

'JOHANNES MOORE,
EXERCITUS BRITANNICI DUX,
PRŒLIO OCCISUS.
MDCCCIX.'" R. S. B.

made to boom along the surface of the water, they might perhaps have done some real mischief. As it was, however, they only excited a bustle amongst the merchant ships, many of which cut their cables, and, the wind being fair, they drifted out of the harbour in groups of eight or ten in a body. There appeared something rather indecent, it is true, in the hurry of these pacific gentlemen, and something comical also. I was rowing past one transport, when the boat was hailed by a military officer. We lay upon our oars to hear what he had to say.

"I wish you would give us some help here," he cried; "we are all soldiers on board, and don't know how to get the anchor up, or how to set the sails."

"Where's the master and his crew?" we asked.

"Oh!" replied the soldier, laughing, "the scamps took to their boat upon a shot passing between the masts; and here we are, a parcel of land-lubbers, as you see, willing enough to work, shot or no shot, if you will be good enough to put us in the way."

As the ship by which we had been hailed was already full of troops, I put a midshipman and a couple of the boat's crew on board, and then proceeded with the fifty men we were embarking. Presently I saw my friends, the soldier-sailors, heaving up their anchor, and making sail in perfectly good style. The ragamuffin of a skipper joined his vessel off the port; and the midshipman returned with many thanks from the troops who had been so unhandsomely deserted.

Another transport, however, lying considerably in shore of the one which we relieved, and consequently all the nearer to the battery, got under weigh in the most deliberate style imaginable, made sail regularly, and, having accidentally cast the wrong way on tripping her anchor, did not wear round with her head off shore, but filled upon the larboard tack, and stood on, nearing the guns more and more every minute, and drawing all their fire upon her. After a time she tacked, and sailed leisurely out to sea, actually delaying to make all sail till she was beyond the reach of shot.

Meanwhile three, if not four, of the transports, lying nearest to the town of Corunna, managed matters so ill, that on cutting their cables, without first having their sails properly set, they could not clear the point, and so went plump ashore, just inside a small rocky island, on which the castle of San Antonio is built, at the distance of two or three hundred yards from the walls at the north-western angle of the city. The hard granite on which Corunna stands being an overmatch for the ribs of these vessels, it very soon pierced their sides, and laid them on their beam-ends. A dozen boats were employed for a full hour to remove the troops to other transports. But even these provoking shipwrecks proved, as will be seen presently, highly useful to the purpose then in hand, the orderly embarkation of the rear-guard, and the other remaining troops, consisting of several thousand chosen men, who still kept the enemy at bay, while their comrades passed from the shore to the fleet.

A midshipman, I believe of the Ville de Paris, had been sent on shore with a message to Sir Samuel Hood, who superintended the embarkation of the army. On his way to the landing-place, he observed the transports alluded to bilged and deserted; and having done his errand, and being in no great hurry to return, he pulled between the castle of San Antonio and the sally-port which opens from the salient angle of the bastion, forming the extreme point of the principal works in that quarter of the citadel.

"It would be a great shame," quoth the middy, "if these vessels, wrecked though they be, should fall into the hands of the French; so I shall go on board and set fire to them."

This exploit he accordingly executed; but although there rose a considerable smoke from the wrecks during the afternoon, the flames did not burst out till about an hour or two after sunset, almost at the moment named for assembling the launches and barges of the fleet to embark the rear-guard. Everything was so well arranged, and the discipline of the troops so admirable, that, although the night turned out exceedingly dark, we might probably have got all the men on board before morning, without any serious difficulty or disorder. But by means of the splendid illumination caused by these burning ships, stranded within less than a hundred yards of the sally-port, the soldiers marched down to the boats in companies, and embarked with as much ease and celerity as if it had been noon day. The whole operation was thus accomplished, not only without the loss of a man, or the occurrence of a single accident, but in about one quarter of the time it must have occupied under other circumstances. This took place on the evening of the 17th of January, 1809, the day after the battle; and, before breakfast-time next morning, the whole fleet of men-of-war and transports stood out to sea.

As we in the Endymion had the exclusive charge of the convoy of transports, it was our business to remain to the very last, to assist the ships with provisions, and otherwise to regulate the movements of the stragglers. Whilst thus engaged, and lying to, with our main-topsail to the mast, a small Spanish boat came alongside, with two or three British officers in her. On these gentlemen being invited to step up and say what they wanted, one of them begged we would inform him where the transport 139 was to be found?

"How can we possibly tell you that?" said the officer of the watch. "Don't you see the ships are scattered as far as the horizon in every direction? You had much better come on board this ship in the mean time."

"No, sir, no," cried the officers; "we have received directions to go on board the transport 139, and her we must find."

"What is all this about?" inquired the captain of the Endymion; and being told of the scruples of the strangers, insisted upon their coming up. He very soon explained to them the utter impossibility, at such a moment, of finding out any particular transport amongst between three and four hundred ships, every one of which was following her own way. We found out afterwards that these gentlemen were naturally apprehensive of having it imagined they had designedly come to the frigate for better quarters. Nothing, of course, was farther from our thoughts; indeed, it was evidently the result of accident. So we sent away their little boat; and just at that

moment the gun-room steward announced breakfast. We invited our new friends down, and gave them a hearty meal in peace and comfort; a luxury they had not enjoyed for many a long and rugged day.

Our next care was to afford our tired warriors the much-required comforts of a razor and clean linen. We divided the party amongst us; and I was so much taken with one of these officers, Colonel de Lancey, that I urged him to accept such accommodation as my cabin and wardrobe afforded. He had come to us without one stitch of clothes beyond what he then wore, and these, to say the truth, not in the best condition at the elbows and other angular points of his frame. Let that pass; he was as fine a fellow as ever lived, and I had much pride and pleasure in taking care of him during the passage.

We shortly became great friends; but on reaching England we parted, and I never saw him more. Of course he soon lost sight of me; but his fame rose high, and, as I often read his name in the Gazettes during the subsequent campaigns in the Peninsula, I looked forward with a gradually increasing anxiety to the renewal of an acquaintance begun so auspiciously. At last I was gratified by a bright flash of hope in this matter, which went out, alas! as speedily as it came.

Not quite six years after the events here related, I came home from India in command of a sloop of war. Before entering the Channel, we fell in with a ship which gave us the first news of the battle of Waterloo, and spared us a precious copy of the Duke of Wellington's despatch. Within five minutes after landing at Portsmouth, I met a near relation of my own, which seemed a fortunate rencontre, for I had not received a letter from home for nearly a year, and I eagerly asked him,

"What news of all friends?"

"I suppose," he said, "you know of your sister's marriage?"

"No, indeed! I do not! which sister?"

He told me.

"But to whom is she married?" I cried out, with intense impatience, and wondering greatly that he had not told me this at once.

"Sir William de Lancey was the person," he answered. But he spoke not in the joyous tone that befits such communications.

"God bless me!" I exclaimed, "I am delighted to hear that. I know him well; we picked him up in a boat at sea, after the battle of Corunna, and I brought him home in my cabin in the Endymion. I see by the despatch, giving an account of the late victory, that he was badly wounded. How is he now? I observe by the postscript of the Duke's letter, that strong hopes are entertained of his recovery."

"Yes," said my friend, "that was reported, but could hardly have been believed. Sir William was mortally wounded, and lived not quite a week after the action. The only comfort about this sad matter is, that his poor wife, being near the field at the time, joined him immediately after the battle, and had the melancholy satisfaction of attending her husband to the last!"

CHAPTER XXVIII.

CORCUBION.

After the constant state of excitement in which we had been living in Spain, even the eternal bustle of Portsmouth soon appeared tame and noiseless. For the usual period of nine days, the wonders we had seen gained us a ready audience: the battle of Corunna; the death of Sir John Moore; the enthusiasm of the Spaniards; and the dark heaven of the ladies' eyes, in that land of love and romance, were topics which insured us popularity wherever we turned. But, after a time, even we ourselves began to tire of telling the same story over and over again, and sometimes fancied we could detect awkward symptoms on the part of our friends, as if they too were becoming a little bit wearied with extravaganzas in which they could not share.

Travellers unfortunately are perpetually forgetting, that as the soul of good fellowship in conversation is equality, if they presume too much on their knowledge, be that ever so great, they will inevitably dispose their company not to listen to them, and they will be set down as bores, great in proportion to the extent of their wanderings. The feeling of conscious ignorance is more or less painful to all men, therefore the judicious traveller's tact seems to lie in knowing how to let out just as much, or rather a little less than people wish to hear. Hardly anything should come from himself; his knowledge should either be drawn from him in the shape of answers to inquiries, or be left till called for by more inquisitive persons. In short, he should be like a pump, which will deliver nothing unless constantly urged by an external force; and not like a cock, which when once turned lets everything gush out.

This being pretty nearly the case with us at Portsmouth, we soon fell out of favour, and sighed most anxiously to be once again abroad; for we were now left to kick our heels in the streets of that huge naval storehouse, Portsmouth, as little noticed as if we had never worn Don Fernando Septimo's cockade in our hats, nor ever figured at a Spanish tertulia, nor learned the deep guttural of the semi-Moorish dialect of the Peninsula. Besides which, as fresh news poured in from the seat of war, our story became stale, and we longed vehemently to be once again amongst wild adventures, far from the vulgar, common-place world of home, to see strange sights and strange faces, hear new tongues, climb mountains of which we had never before heard even the names; to luxuriate in cities heretofore known only to our eyes on the maps; to bathe in the Guadalquiver, or the Tagus, with its golden sands, dear to our earliest fancies; and perhaps to visit Gibraltar and Teneriffe, or to quaff Madeira in its native vineyard, or to pluck ripe oranges from the very trees of St. Michael's. These, and a hundred other visions, all of which were in due season realised far beyond our hopes, now filled our young fancies, and made every day of the re-equipment of the ship an age of delay. But I find by an old letter, dated off Cape St. Vincent, it was not till March 1809, that we were fairly adrift once more on the wide world, like a set of aquatic knights-errant,

seeking adventures, either by sea or by land, as chance and our own good star, in which we had boundless confidence, might please to direct.

To us nothing came amiss; all was new, and what was new was clear gain. It mattered not where we struck the coast, the land seemed everywhere on fire; for Buonaparte had roused all Spain into a moral volcano of such violence, that whenever any point was relieved from the superincumbent pressure of the French legions, straightway there burst forth a political eruption.

For some time we cruised off the coast of Portugal, calling at Lagos Bay and other places, where our curiosity, which was augmented by every fresh visit, was amply gratified. I can hardly venture to say what absurdities we might not have been guilty of, to put ourselves in the way of adventures, had not Good Fortune, the presiding deity of all men who are duly on the watch, furnished us with work enough, not only for the extra dose of enthusiasm with which we were puffed up, but with good honest occupation for our heads and hands, in the way of true service to the cause which undermined Napoleon, and eventually capsised his ill-gotten throne.

The period of our cruise in the Endymion being nearly out, we were steering home again, and sailing slowly along the coast of Spain, when, in the beginning of April 1809, being then nearly becalmed off Cape Finisterre, we saw a small vessel coming towards us from the shore. The night was falling fast, but she reached us before it was dark, as we put our head towards her immediately on perceiving that she was making for the frigate.

The Spaniards on board this vessel had been sent as a deputation from a body of insurgents, anxious to obtain assistance from any English ship on the coast. They entreated us to bring our frigate into their bay; and assured us that, with a little additional aid, the inhabitants would be enabled to expel the French from this part of the country altogether. These men were the bearers of supplicating letters from the Junta of Corcubion; a town, they told us, lying on a narrow arm of the sea, at the very top of the bay. All the world has heard of Cape Finisterre, which, as its name implies, is the terminating angle of the Peninsula; a portion of Europe, detached alike in geographical and in moral history from the rest of the Continent. How different might not the fate of this fair country have been, had some ancient convulsion of the globe broken it completely off at the neck, and interposed a strait not wider than that of the British Channel between it and the neighbouring states!

The Spanish deputation seemed a little surprised that we knew nothing whatever of Corcubion; while, to our eyes, the fact of being summoned to the assistance of a place having no existence on our maps, certainly gave fresh interest to the adventure. The letters of the Junta set forth, in most moving terms, that they were in want of nothing but arms: "Falta solamente armas!" was the grand theme; and if their operations, said they, could only be countenanced by the presence of a British man-of-war, the success of the campaign of Corcubion was secure.

Our captain was a clear-headed, judicious, and experienced officer, who, in the course of long service, had often been employed on the coasts of Spain and Italy, as well as amongst the islands and along the shores of Greece; so that he knew much better than most of us what value to attach to these high-sounding promises of great deeds of arms to be done by peasantry against regular troops. Still, as it was clearly his duty to assist the Spaniards upon this occasion, he co-operated with them heartily, though I cannot believe that he was ever carried off his feet as we were. Perhaps, indeed, it is better on every occasion of real service, that all extra enthusiasm should be confined to the instruments with which the commander is to work, while he takes care to keep himself free to act to the best of his judgment, unbiassed by mere feelings or wishes, or any exaggerated hopes.

Be this as it may, it was resolved that we should enter the bay of Finisterre next morning, to see what was doing, before lending the patriots, as they called themselves, such assistance as lay in our power. We stood off and on for the night; and I shall never forget the state of excitement in which we were kept till the day broke. The novelty of the whole affair, the prospect of an actual meeting with the enemy, the exceeding curiosity we had to see the population of a country fairly engaged in expelling a foreign invader, and the assistance we were about to lend to so holy a cause, filled us with a wild sort of joy, which set every one upon planning attacks, and achieving conquests, such as were never heard of before. The decks rung all night long with cutlasses, pistols, and muskets, which were fitted and furbished afresh for this new and unexpected service. An additional stock of ball-cartridges was filled, and casks of powder got ready, for the patriot cannon. Our largest grape-shot also, it was thought, might fit the small calibre of their field-pieces; and the ship's tailors were employed in ripping up the signal-flags, and sewing them into colours for the new regiments we were about to organise.

The anxious natives on shore had probably descried us from the heights; for when we sailed into the bay, early next morning, the frigate was surrounded by boats, crowded with people of all ranks and classes, eager to express their gratitude for such prompt aid to their cause. Old men and young men ran about the decks hugging and kissing us, according to their custom, but in a manner so repugnant to our northern habits, that such of the sailors as had never been in the way of being so saluted before, were disposed to receive these marks of affection with anything but good-will. The captain, who knew the Dons of old, gave orders for a distribution of tobacco amongst our visitors; and I suppose that since the days when the Moors were expelled from the land, there was no greater joy in the Peninsula than this boon produced. The dreadful disorders consequent upon the French war had so completely broken up the ordinary relations of commerce, that many districts of country, of which Corcubion was one, had been long deprived of their wonted supplies of this luxury, or, I may almost call it, in speaking of Spaniards, this necessary of life.

Beef to John Bull, potatoes to Paddy, or grog to a sailor, furnish but faint similes to describe the delight of a Spaniard, who, after some months

of privation, grasps a handful of tobacco-leaves. He never thrusts them into his mouth, according to the American fashion, nor puts the tobacco into a pipe, like an Englishman; but cuts the weed carefully and economically into little fragments, and, having scattered these morsels along a slip of paper, about the size of a visiting-card, he folds it neatly into what he calls 'un cigarro de papel;' or, more tastefully still, inserts the pieces in a slender tube of straw, and names it a 'pajilla,' or lady's cigar. If, however, he be very rich in this great treasure, he rolls the leaves together into larger masses, which, from being made exclusively of tobacco, he calls, *par excellence*, 'Puros.'

When the ship was secured at her anchors, we made arrangements for landing. We could spare our new allies only a hundred and fifty muskets, and as many cutlasses; but these, together with a due proportion of boarding-pikes and tomahawks, with plenty of powder and ball, when displayed on the quarter-deck, made a considerable show, and greatly delighted the deputies, who had been a little disappointed at first when told of our small supply.

The enthusiasm amongst the peasantry and townspeople on shore rose to a still higher pitch than anything we had seen enacted on board. The women embraced us most cordially, with tears in their bright eyes; the children ran up and down the streets of the village squealing out 'Viva! viva!' while the old folks of both sexes hobbled to their doors to greet the arrival of the Heaven-sent strangers. Numerous entertainments were prepared for us; and, as these good people would never be satisfied that we gave them credit for sincerity unless we partook of every dish at every feast, we were soon overstocked with provisions. A visit to the patriot camp was, of course, our first grand object; and no sooner had we hinted a wish to proceed there, than horses and mules, by the dozen, were at the door. The muskets and swords landed from the Endymion were then placed in carts; and off we set to the field in grand cavalcade, accompanied by all the younger inhabitants, and half the older ones, of this pretty village, too soon to become a terrible scene of misery and bloodshed.

Corcubion, as I have already mentioned, stands nearly at the top of a little arm of the sea, connected with the great bight or bay of Finisterre, and lies, snugly enough, in the most sheltered nook of a rich valley, formed by two chains of mountains, running, if I recollect right, nearly north and south, or parallel to the general direction of the coast of Spain at this point. Like most of the villages we saw in Galicia, it is protected from the chilling effects of the sea-winds in winter, and the still more searching easterly gales of spring. The tops of most of the hills in the neighbourhood are barren, generally of a cold gray tinge, and contrasting very agreeably with the fertility which covers the greater part of the soil below. I have seldom seen a more picturesque or happier-looking spot than this quiet valley, or one into which the iron foot of war, it might be thought, had less business to intrude. So thought not the inhabitants; and as they were not content to let things alone, they had soon a bitter lesson of prudence forced upon them. For my own part, I have been sorry to find, ever since that period, that most of my Arcadian associations have been wofully disturbed. I can now hardly look at a perfectly peaceful scene, such as that of the valley of Corcubion when we first saw it, one which seems to be set apart from all the cares of the world, and in which war ought hardly to be known even by name, without having immediately called up to my fancy the wreck and ruin which a few hours' invasion of regular troops might so soon bring upon the fortunes, and even the lives, of its inhabitants.

The causes and consequences of the occupation of Spain by the French, on the great scale, are already too well known to require repetition. It is only, therefore, with a few of the details that I shall pretend to meddle. The tenure by which the invaders held the country, to say nothing of its outrageous injustice, was, in a military point of view, not a little insecure, in consequence of the universal exasperation of the inhabitants; and it required, accordingly, a very skilful mixture of forbearance and of severity, on the part of the French, to maintain even the ground upon which their troops actually stood. For soldiers and horses must have food; and as the supply of any particular district was soon swallowed up by those two-legged and four-legged locusts, which drifted in clouds over the Peninsula in those unhappy days, it became necessary for the army to collect provisions from the surrounding country, either by dint of good payment or actual force, or through the medium of terror. It was not, I believe, much according to Napoleon's system of war, when he invaded foreign parts, to pay the natives for the board and lodging of his forces; and as it was not always convenient to detach considerable bodies of troops to collect provisions at the edge of the sabre, the last and terrible alternative of intimidation was, after a time, very generally resorted to.

'He jests at scars who never felt a wound;' and, in the same way, people are apt to heed lightly the misery of those cruel devastations, of which they have never witnessed any example with their own eyes. And I have many a time thought, since those days, how little aware we Englishmen at home often are of the prodigious advantages we have enjoyed during the wars of the last forty years; and how very trifling, after all, our highest sacrifices have been, when balanced against the unspeakable blessing of being exempted from the actual cautery of foreign invasion. We ought also to recollect how petty in fact is the additional load of that part of our taxation which goes to pay the interest of the money expended in securing untouched those institutions and manners which, in spite of everything that can be said by croakers and reformers, not only guarantee the perpetuity of our liberties, but yield us all we can desire, or hope to possess. It is, therefore, every way just that the present generation, and all generations of our posterity, who are to reap the full advantage of the great struggles alluded to, should contribute their share of payment. To murmur at defraying the interest of capital employed in securing the national independence, and keeping far from our shores the inroads of foreign armies, must appear to every one who has seen much of the rest of the world the most unreasonable thing imaginable.

The French, as I have already described, having for a time, and by sheer force, thrust the English allies out of Spain, now had it all their own way;

and the poor Spaniards were left to contend single-handed with the whole power of Buonaparte.

> "Alone the noble nation stood,
> When from Corunna, in the main,
> The star of England set in blood.
> Ere long, on Talavera's plain
> That star resplendent rose again;
> And though that day was doom'd to be
> A day of frustrate victory,
> Not vainly bled the brave*!"

In the mean while, before the tide of war was made to turn, the French ruled the country, and perhaps were compelled to rule it, as their only resource, literally with a rod of iron. The head-quarters of their army in Galicia were at Santiago de Compostella; from which point they sent out small or large divisions, according to circumstances, to keep the surrounding parts in subjection. At the same time, compact bodies of cavalry scoured the country, and by threats of severe vengeance laid the villages under contribution for the supply of corn and provisions of all kinds. As these marauding parties frequently consisted of only a few men in each, it is not to be supposed they were everywhere tamely allowed to rob and pillage at their pleasure. Many places in fact resisted; for example, the village of Muros, not many leagues south of Corcubion. Three dragoons called there some weeks before our arrival on the coast, with a requisition for corn and wine. The inhabitants refused, and drove the party off. The French, however, returned in a few days with a whole troop of horse, quite sufficient, had there been any further resistance, to have sacked and burned the town.

The people of Corcubion had been several times visited by these unpleasant guests, to whose demands they had yielded with no very good grace. This the French cared little about, provided they got the provisions of which they were in search. At length, the inhabitants of the town and neighbourhood, becoming tired of these insulting and ruinous drains on their wealth, resolved to resist. The peasantry, who were soon called together by the leading men of the place, to the number of two or three thousand, formed themselves into a patriotic army, capable, as they imagined, not only of refusing with impunity these troublesome requisitions of the French troops in their own province, but of driving the invaders back again, helter-skelter, across the Pyrenees. In fact, their greatest apprehension seemed to be, that the proverbial nimbleness of their enemy might enable him to skip out of the country unhurt; and accordingly, the favourite project amongst the Spaniards always was, to surround him, and thus, by getting between the invaders and their own country, take them all prisoners!

Meanwhile, we were assured by the redoubtable Junta of Corcubion, that nothing further was wanting to complete the liberation of Spain but arms. "If you English will only manage to arm the peasantry assembled here and elsewhere," said the Junta, "you shall see how speedily these French will scamper off!"

I can recall, at this distance of time, with perfect distinctness, the quiet expression of humour in our experienced captain's countenance while he listened to these pompous assurances of the enthusiastic Dons, on our way to the patriot camp. I remember also being rather provoked at his calmness; for, although there was nothing in the least degree uncourteous in his manner, nor anything that in the eyes of the Spaniards could be construed into distrust, we, who knew him well, could read in his looks the total absence of confidence in such extravagant hopes. Long afterwards, I was amused by hearing an officer of still greater experience say, "Whenever you hear a Spaniard declare for Liberty or Death, by shouting 'Libertad o Muerte!' be quite sure he is in the very act of turning to the right about."

The captain spoke no Spanish, though there was reason to suspect he understood it pretty well when he heard it spoken. This probably enabled him to get on better, upon the whole, with the Junta, than if he had been able to enter personally into discussions with them. It would have been different, of course, if these Spaniards had been men of sense and experience, or if there had been any real service to be executed in concert with the insurgents; but, as it was, I believe nothing could have been better. He was fortunate also in having a very good supporter, while his own professed ignorance of the language afforded him leisure to reflect before he was called upon to reply. I allude to our grand interpreter, and the main-spring of all our operations, the second lieutenant, now Captain Charles Thruston, an officer who had seen much active service, both afloat and on shore, and who, to the important advantages of experience in this peculiar line of warfare, added a knowledge of the Spanish language, and a heartiness of address eminently suited to win the confidence of the people we were amongst. To give efficacy to these qualifications, he was gifted with talents and resources which it is a thousand pities should not have found higher exercise in the service of his country, than in this inglorious campaign of Corcubion. It was of the greatest importance, however, to the cause, to have one man amongst us whom all parties esteemed, and were quite willing to follow, and who likewise understood the language and habits of the natives so thoroughly, that no misapprehension of their meaning was ever likely to arise.

Before these patriotic bands had called us in to assist them, they had been sorely distracted amongst themselves as to the nomination of a commander-in-chief. About two thousand men, the Junta informed us, were assembled at a place called Bernun, at the distance of a league or so from Corcubion, further up the valley, to the north. Only a few of these were properly armed with firelocks, while some carried pikes, or swords, and the rest brought nothing to the cause but boundless zeal and much talk. Amongst these people were several old soldiers, who, having seen a little service in their day, knew the value of discipline, and had learned, in the course of their campaigning, that the chief element of good order is a well-grounded reliance on the skill of the commander. These men naturally wished to appoint as their chief a person named Camaño, who, from having served twelve years in the regular army, it was reasonable to think knew something of military matters. The priest of the parish, however, had the voice of the peasantry with him. This worthy and gallant pastor, whose name was Lapido, possessed the en-

* Southey's Carmen Triumphale.

tire confidence of the villagers and neighbours who formed his congregation, and who were naturally prompted to nominate him their leader by the very same motives which induced the soldiers to call out for Camaño.

Violent disputes, it appeared, had taken place at Corcubion upon this knotty point before our arrival; but, fortunately, the mighty question was settled by the time we mingled in these transactions. It would have been a troublesome addition to our responsibilities, to have been called upon to decide between the rival pretensions of the sword and the gown. The proverb carried the day, however, and the soldier yielded to the churchman. The good sense and experience of the veteran, indeed, showed him, that he might be more useful as a second, acting under one whom the great mass of the people cheerfully obeyed, than he could possibly be as commander-in-chief, with the church secretly, if not avowedly, against him, and, of course, the body of the congregation jealous of his authority. Camaño also, by his influence, succeeded in prevailing upon the whole of his own party to adopt the same course; wisely remarking, that since, in such times, unanimity is the life and soul of enterprise, it would ill become old soldiers to be wrangling about precedence, when the enemy was at their gates.

Things being thus amicably adjusted, the reconciled rivals set about their task of disciplining their troops. The worthy Padre, however, having heretofore taken charge only of the souls of his flock, was entirely adrift when he came to the details of arranging their external operations; and Camaño, whose knowledge of the art of war was confined pretty much to the handling of a musket, was equally thrown out when busied with the intricacies of discipline, and the troublesome details of classifying the officers according to their respective merits and pretensions. But upon one point the two chiefs were quite agreed —that it was hopeless to think of making any effectual stand against the disciplined troops of France with a body of unarmed peasantry. The ruling Junta of Corcubion, consisting of the mayor and corporation, were accordingly appealed to; and they, in like manner, after due deliberation, having seen matters in the same light, agreed that, before declaring war, or even acting on the defensive, it would be advisable to seek assistance from the English.

A small vessel was accordingly equipped, and despatched to sea, with orders to cruise about till she fell in with some one of the numerous British men-of-war reported to be roving along the coast, by order of the English government, for the express purpose of assisting the patriotic cause. On the first day of their cruise they met with us; and we, of course, yielded to their supplications, by entering Finisterre Bay. We hesitated, however, about running the ship into the narrow harbour of Corcubion, as the Spaniards wished us to do. In the first place, until we had surveyed it carefully in our own boats, we could not be sure that it was safe for so large a ship as the Endymion to enter; and, in the next place, we were by no means satisfied that we could be of any further use to the cause by taking such a step; while it was obvious that, under some circumstances, it would give the enemy great advantages over us. In the end, as will be seen, we departed from this cautious line of reasoning, and had very nearly paid a high forfeit for our indiscretion.

But it is time to tell about the camp, to which we rode out in such grand style, surrounded by the villagers, shouting 'Viva! viva!' and filling the valley with cries of vengeance against the French. At every step, as we rolled along, the crowd gained fresh numbers, till, by the time we reached Bernun, our cavalcade made a very respectable army of itself, as armies then went; and we began to think we really were destined to be the liberators of Spain!

A little circumstance struck us during this memorable day's trip, which marked strongly enough the degree of enthusiasm in the patriot cause. The ploughs in most of the fields along which we passed on our way to the camp of the insurgents were guided by women, whose husbands or sons, they assured us, had been sent to join the forces assembled to repel the invasion. Whenever we stopped to compliment them on their public spirit, they shouted like the rest of the crowd, and evinced no less animation or confidence of success than was shown by the men.

In looking back to those times, it is difficult to say whether we ought to admire this exaggerated sort of show, or to laugh at it. It undoubtedly tended to keep up the enthusiasm which, in the long-run, contributed essentially to the expulsion of the French: and if the men, thus released from their natural occupation of tilling the ground, had behaved, when brought in contact with the enemy, any better than these patriotic matrons would have done, the incident of the deserted ploughs might furnish matter for applause. But if the male part of the population flocked to the camp merely for the sake of bravado, and invariably ran away the moment the flash of a pan or the glitter of a bayonet was seen, it may be asked of what real use was it to the cause that they should leave their farms to be cultivated by the women?

CHAPTER XXIX.

TRIP TO THE INTERIOR OF GALICIA.

It is clear enough, after all is said and done, that unless there had existed some very general and deep-seated feeling of hostility in Spain, the French must soon have gained the day in that country, instead of being eventually cut to pieces. It would be hardly fair not to concede to the Spaniards the merit of sincerity in their bitter antipathy to the French, or to deny that they were willing to make, and that they really did make, very great sacrifices to get rid of the invaders. Unfortunately, however, that nation has shown at all times, and under all political or military circumstances, an innate jealousy of foreign interference of every kind. Even when it comes in the shape of hearty alliance, and when other countries are willing to make common cause with them, they seem incapable of shaking off that Chinese-like repugnance to external contact, which forms so remarkable a feature of their character.

They were always willing to take from our hands

as many muskets and dollars as we chose to send them; but they as uniformly repelled every attempt on our part to teach them how to use these weapons. There can be no doubt that even the ploughmen, whose places we saw taken by the women of Corcubion, if properly trained and properly led, would have fought as well as any other troops. But, mismanaged as they were, their patriotism was wasted, and often worse than wasted, being perverted to the enemy's purposes. The baneful operation of these national jealousies often makes a Spaniard fancy it less dishonourable to be beaten by his enemy, than to submit to be disciplined and led on by foreign officers to certain victory.

I have thought it right to mention these peculiarities here, in order that what follows may be better understood, and also to show what a strange mixture there is in the Spanish character; a mixture, be it remembered, which, while it very often provokes us to be angry with these stately Dons, has always in it something which prevents the possibility of our despising them. We seldom see anything shabby about a Spaniard; nothing mean or tricky. He may certainly be roused to great ferocity, and become a very tiger in his way; or he may turn about, when he ought to stand firm, and run off like a sheep before a wolf; but he will rarely, under any circumstances, prove a traitor to his native land.

On reaching the camp at Bernun, we found the patriot army exercising by divisions, under the immediate directions of old Lapido, the commander-in-chief, the priest of the village, who buckled over his cassock a huge rusty sabre, taken by the guerillas, he told us, from a French dragoon in the mountain-passes. When we approached, a general halt was ordered, and those who had muskets presented them, as well as they might; while those who had none went through the motions equally well with their pikes or staves, formed out of scythes and reaping-hooks, by which these redoubtable warriors were, according to their own account, so speedily to eject the French from their country.

As soon as the first salutations were over, the captain of the Endymion, with a gravity which showed how far the sense of duty can overcome a feeling of ridicule, made the patriots a speech, interpreted, sentence for sentence, by Lieutenant Thruston. He complimented them upon their appearance, their military zeal, and their generous devotion; saying, that as nothing could be more suitable to the times than such public-spirited demonstrations of hostility to the merciless invaders of their magnificent country, so they might reckon with confidence on the hearty co-operation of England in so just a cause. A pair of colours (made, as I before mentioned, by the tailors of the Endymion) were then presented to the Reverend Don Pedro Lapido, Commander of the Forces, and an elegant sword to Lieutenant-General Camaño, the military mover in these grand proceedings.

I need hardly say that the air was rent with Vivas; and I am sure any one ignorant of Spain, who had seen the manner in which we were pulled about, and the very hems of our garments kissed; or heard the words 'Vivan los Ingleses!' bawled into our ears, would have declared all the reproaches uttered against the national jealousy of the Spaniards a scandalous libel. They offered to be guided by us in everything; wished us to lead them instantly against the enemy, lest he should escape. Even the privates in this enthusiastic army, forgetting all order, left their ranks, to come crowding round us. We should have been worse than the mules on whose backs we were swayed about in the crowd, like a ship in the trough of the sea, if we could have remained insensible to this adulation; and though we knew and said to one another that the greater part of it was 'all my eye,' or mere words, still enough of the unction entered our minds to make us fancy the hour was at last come when we were to be of some splendid use to mankind.

But in saying this, perhaps I ought to answer only for us juniors, when I speak of heads being turned. Our sagacious commander, I suspect, was never taken in; and my brother-officer Thruston, as interpreter-general, had so much to do, and was consulted about so many things of real importance, that he had less leisure to be carried away by the excitements of the moment, than some of the rest of our party.

In one of my letters, written during the early days of our intercourse with the patriots, I find these words: "I know something of the language now, though I speak it with difficulty; and as there is much to do, I have seldom a moment to spare. This, you may well conceive, is very delightful; indeed, the whole thing is so novel, so unexpected, so grand, and so bewitching, that it really appears like a fairy dream. Only fancy our being sent as ambassadors to an army of patriotic peasants, on some mission about new levies, or arms, or ammunition, and three thousand men presenting arms (such as they are), and shouting 'Viva! viva!'"

To some this will appear very boyish and ridiculous; but to those who remember how ardent the enthusiasm respecting the Spanish insurrection became even in England, at such a distance from the scene, the fact of our being sucked into the vortex, on the spot, will not appear surprising.

After the review was over, the speeches made, the colours presented, and the new sword buckled on, one of our most showy drums, brought from the ship, was bestowed upon the army, to their unspeakable delight. A youth who had been a drummer in the Spanish forces was soon found; and the sylvan shades of the pretty valley of Corcubion rung, probably for the first time since the flood, with the rattle of warlike music.

We then left the troops to enjoy the sight of their newly-acquired treasures; for I ought to have mentioned before, that, along with the colours, all the muskets, cutlasses, boarding-pikes, and other munitions of war, which we could spare, were delivered over to the proper authorities for distribution to a select body of soldiers. This ceremony was, of course, deferred to the following morning; for it appears to be an invariable rule amongst Spaniards, never to do anything to-day that can by any means be delayed till to-morrow. 'Mañana' (pronounced manyana) is, accordingly, the most frequently used word by that easy-going nation; and I am sure it must be well engraved on the ears of every one who has had any business to do with people who really seem to love procrastination on its own account.

But as eating and drinking are operations which nature will not allow even the Spaniards to put off to mañana, our friend, the worthy old priest

Lapido, begged us to accompany himself, Camaño, and the rest of the officers, to a grand entertainment, prepared in a farm-house not far from the camp at Bernun.

The feast consisted of an immense kid roasted whole, and four or five minor dishes, of whose quality no particular mention is made in my notes. It is a standing order in sea-cookery, I may remark, never to ask of what any eatable is composed; a rule which we found it useful to adopt whenever we landed in Spain. After dinner, coffee was served up in large bowls, followed by a comfortable allowance of hot punch; and a brisk fire of cigars closed the entertainment. Through the tobacco-smoke, the warriors conversed of deeds done and to be done, the rascality of the French invasion, the noble enthusiasm of the Spaniards, the mustering of numerous armies of patriots, the successes of the native troops, and the drooping fortunes of the invaders. Only one thing appeared to damp the general ardour, the want of arms; and the words 'Falta solamente armas' rung from end to end of the barn. I find it set down in my memorandums of that day, "that it was quite distressing to see so many men, willing and able to serve their country, rendered totally useless for want of arms, at a moment when the true spirit of patriotism seemed fairly to have been raised."

I had yet to learn, that the mere act of putting weapons into men's hands, and even forming them into corps, and calling them troops, will no more convert undisciplined men into true soldiers, than bestowing the forms of a constitutional government upon nations politically degraded will transmute slaves into freemen. Both the one and the other of these manifest fallacies, however, are so fascinating, that the world, I have no doubt, will go on to the end of time indulging in them, whenever a people is roused up against invaders, or a successful rebellion enables the citizens to remodel their form of government. The wise course to follow in both cases, though by no means obvious, is, perhaps, not beyond the range of our inquiries. Indeed, there are few discussions, which, if conducted in a simple and intelligible manner, might contribute, in the long-run, more essentially to narrow the circle of prejudice and error on this highly-exciting topic, or one which might lead more directly to the practical happiness of mankind. I need hardly say, however, that such speculations were not even dreamed of by us at Corcubion.

Under our auspices, the peasantry continued to flock in from the adjacent country; and although we could supply scarcely a twentieth part of these patriots with arms, we aided the good cause, as far as lay in our power, by putting their forts and outposts in order, and giving them such advice as we could respecting their commissariat, and other arrangements of the troops. Fortunately, in all these matters Mr. Thruston had considerable experience, from having frequently before acted with military forces. He soon acquired, also, an influence in the camp, which, if the materials he had to deal with had been more energetic, might have saved these poor troops from great disasters. His first object was, if possible, to place the men in a situation of security against any sudden attack of the enemy, which he had too much reason to fear might overset the whole of their plans.

In truth, however, it was not easy to make out what really were the plans and objects of our patriotic protégés, unanimously agreed only on two points, a bitter hatred to the French, and a perfect reliance on themselves. The mischief of this unbounded confidence was, that it took the place of all those precautions upon which alone men of experience in war ground their hopes. There was no way, at least that we could discover, to rouse our Spanish friends to the smallest apprehension of their enemy, or to induce them to take any steps to guard against the military vengeance which, in all other parts of the country, the French had not been slow to inflict in similar cases of revolt.

I ought to have mentioned, that just before we anchored in Finisterre bay, the French had sent to Corcubion a fresh demand for corn and wine. To which requisition the Junta sent for answer—"Let the French come and take it." To all previous demands of a similar nature they had yielded, not without murmuring, though without any positive show of resistance; but they were now determined to make a stand.

This imprudent Junta met in council every day at Corcubion, and, at their desire, one of us always attended as a sort of honorary member. These worthy village politicians had not the smallest conception of their total incapacity for military matters, and went on from day to day laying down plans for the future campaign; sending off expresses to the camp; recapitulating to us the numbers of their troops, albeit not one-twentieth part of them were armed. And that small fraction not being supplied with officers, or disciplined, or organised in any way, it was really like children 'playing at soldiers.' The whole affair, indeed, would have been merely ludicrous, if there had not been another party, close to us, playing the same game, but in deep and scornful earnest.

It was our constant entreaty, that the patriots should have confidential scouts posted along the road all the way from Santiago, or wherever the French might be, in order that we might be apprised of their movements and of their force, so as to be able to prepare for their coming, if they were not too strong, or to withdraw, if they were likely to overpower us. But the self-satisfied, soporific Junta solemnly assured us, that these precautions were carefully taken, and that they received daily, indeed almost hourly, the most exact information of all the enemy were doing. Yet it so happened that they would never let us see any of these accredited agents of theirs, either before they set out, or when they returned; and it soon became but too manifest, that the only sources of this boasted information were the popular rumours of the peasantry. As the Junta comforted themselves by believing those stories only which told in the way they wished, there was hardly a chance of their being correctly informed. Thus, in a short time the natives ceased to talk of their enemies, except to scoff at them; and it might have been supposed, that the mere goodwill and pleasure of the Junta of Corcubion, without a warlike deed of any kind, was more than a match for the activity and genius of Napoleon and all his legions.

Under these circumstances, we felt much at a loss not only what to advise, but what to do our-

selves. The Junta and their army, who professed the greatest confidence in us, earnestly solicited our counsel, but never showed the slightest disposition to profit by it. We recommended them, as one step of consequence, to open communications with the Spanish general, the Marquis of Romana, who was said to be in force in some part of Galicia, and to beg him to send them officers to train their rapidly accumulating body of insurgents; or to say whether it would not be advisable that detachments should be sent from our camp, where they were idle and useless, to that of Romana, where their services might be turned to some account. But we never once succeeded in getting the Junta to budge an inch out of their own way. And thus they went on from day to day, exercising between two and three thousand unarmed peasants, and telling us, in the grandest terms which their sounding language could afford, all the great things they were to do, and had already done; for they still indulged themselves in the vain fancy that the French had actually fallen back from Santiago, in consequence of this formidable demonstration, as they called it, at Corcubion.

The fact was, that the enemy, from some other cause, very different, unquestionably, from anything like our proceedings, had retired a little, and withdrawn those outposts which, at our first arrival, had threatened that part of the country. But we could never prevail upon the Junta, or their reverend commander-in-chief, Lapido, nor even upon our only military authority, Camaño, to take a single business-like step, to ascertain what the French really were about. In this dilemma we endeavoured to gain information for ourselves, by hiring scouts of our own; and the result of our inquiries certainly showed that the enemy had withdrawn most of their troops to Santiago, as if they had suffered reverses elsewhere; and the inference was, that they were less likely to disturb our friends at Corcubion.

The nearest French station of any importance was Camariñas, a fort some six or eight leagues to the north of us; and in order to ascertain correctly whether the enemy had abandoned that place or not, Lieutenant Thruston was sent across the country with a party of marines from the ship. The Endymion's launch, well-armed, was at the same time sent along shore, under another officer, with orders to enter the harbour, make the necessary reconnaissance, and co-operate with the party on land. This delicate and difficult service Mr. Thruston executed with much address A small force only, it turned out, had been left in that neighbourhood, not sufficient to prevent our party cutting out and making prize of a French ship lying at anchor under the batteries. This success gave the patriots at Corcubion such prodigious spirits, that they were with difficulty restrained from marching off in a tumultuous body to the enemy's head-quarters to expel them forcibly from the province. But as these good folks were nearly all unarmed, we prevailed upon them to wait a little, in the expectation that some of the numerous English ships which we knew were cruising along the coast, with a view of giving assistance to the cause, might touch at this bay.

In the mean time, we reiterated our advice to the Junta, that they would take some more systematic precautions than any they had yet adopted against a sudden incursion of the enemy's troops. They replied, that they had secretly done so, and that every pass was watched and guarded, except one, which, they said, it was out of their power to put in a proper state of defence without our help. The captain begged to know what kind of assistance they required; for he did not feel much disposed to allow his marines to act in such company. He was not a little relieved, therefore, by their saying, that what they wanted was not soldiers or sailors, but a couple of the frigate's quarter-deck guns, to plant in one of the passes of the mountains. They described this pass as being so narrow, that, if it were once fortified in this way, the whole strength of the French might be kept in check, until the necessary measures could be taken to bring up the patriot forces from Corcubion to complete the victory.

The captain again assured the Spaniards of his willingness to give them any number of guns, or anything else he had on board, provided it were shown to be necessary to the common cause; but that he could not dismantle his ship without first ascertaining this point. I was accordingly despatched to the pass in the mountains, spoken of by the Junta, with orders to make a survey of the ground, and to report my opinion as to the practicability of its being effectually defended against the French army by a couple of two-and-thirty pound carronades.

The place pointed out lay about fifteen miles from Corcubion; and I set off under the guidance of peasants provided by the Junta, with an escort of half-a-dozen soldiers from the camp, the whole party being very respectably mounted on mules. This was on the 8th of April, and we reached our destination in the course of the day. My imagination had pictured to itself a narrow gorge, or cleft in the hills, like one of those Swiss passes in which the Burgundian invaders were demolished by the rocks and trunks of trees rolled down upon them by the natives. As we jogged along, therefore, I turned over in my mind the various sentences of my future official report, in which was to be described the effect which cannon, placed at the end of the pass, would have upon the advancing enemy, and had worked myself up to a high pitch of military enthusiasm, in which I was well seconded by the guides and escort.

Much was my disappointment, therefore, when I came to the spot designated by this most precious of Juntas as one capable of being defended by a couple of guns against ten thousand French troops. It was an open, cultivated valley, at least a league wide, formed by ranges of hills, not rugged and inaccessible, but quite smooth, and easily to be traversed by any description of troops, artillery inclusive.

I was doubly provoked; first, at finding there was not the slightest chance of stopping the enemy, should he be inclined to advance by the high road which passed along the valley; and secondly, at my own folly in having given any credit to the assertions of the Junta, after the innumerable proofs we had had of their loose and large way of speaking. My sagacious and experienced captain knew them better; for, just as I was starting he said,

"You are going on this expedition, remember, at the request of the local authorities here; but I

venture to prophesy that you will find their narrow pass so wide, that instead of our being able to defend it by two or three guns, it will turn out a full gun-shot in width." And so it literally proved: in fact, not one of the Junta could ever have seen it.

The trip itself was extremely amusing, and the reception I met with from the inhabitants most kind, although not in all respects precisely of the description I could have liked. As the evening fell, we repaired to the nearest village, where the Curate, upon being informed of my mission, invited me to his house, apologising, at the same time, for his want of better accommodation. Supper is a great meal with the Spaniards; but I had not yet acquired a taste for the loads of odious garlic with which everything, bread inclusive, was saturated; and finding that the honest Cura made a point of my eating of every dish on his well-spread table, I was glad to plead extreme weariness in excuse for my want of appetite, and so escaped the garlic. I comforted myself, however, with the prospect of something better in the morning; for I was not more tired than hungry.

I was then shown to a great lobby or barrack-room, on the mud floor of which were spread mats for the escort by which I had been accompanied from the coast, and here and there stood a sort of truckle-bed. On one of these I was fain to lie down 'all standing,' as we call it at sea, 'like a trooper's horse,' merely wrapping myself well in my boat-cloak, in the midst of a famous party of snorers, scattered about on the mats round me. I soon fell asleep, but only to dream of delicious suppers and breakfasts I was never doomed to taste, at least on that expedition. During one of these visions, I fancied there was placed before me a huge bowl of tea and a pyramid of rolls worthy of Hatchett's coffee-house. I eagerly stretched forth my hand to clutch the feast, but was instantly awaked by a voice calling out in Spanish,

"What the devil do you want, Señor Ingles, with my night-cap?"

"Something to eat," I said, half asleep.

"Something to eat!" cried the voice. "You would eat nothing at supper, and now do you expect to find victuals in bed?"

On rubbing my eyes, and sitting up, I observed, by the flickering light of two or three lamps, that the hall was quite full of company, some asleep, and some only then lying down. The number of the Curate's guests was so great, and the accommodation so scanty, that a couple of great lumbering Spaniards, rolled up in their half-wet capotes, had stretched themselves on the bed I had never doubted was intended for me alone. My first impulse was to resign the whole couch to the natives, and seek for a less crowded berth on the ground. But the night was cold, the mud-floor damp, and I had the advantage of priority; so I only pulled my cloak the tighter round me, and made the most of my queer predicament till the day broke.

At sunrise the servant brought each of the party a very small cup of chocolate, and one sweet cake. I could easily have swallowed a dozen such; but as I thought this mouthful was merely preparatory to breakfast, a sort of whet, I asked for no more.

I lost no time in repairing to the Curate's room, expecting to find a pleasant hot meal smoking on the venerable pastor's board. But nothing of the kind saluted my eyes. Abstinence, indeed, had so far modified the delicacy of my tastes, that I should now most gladly have hailed those perfumes which drove me from supper the evening before. Every time the door opened, I looked for the entry of a dish of stewed kid, or hashed fowls, or some remains of the olla podrida which I had despised over-night. Not a morsel of anything eatable made its appearance; and the Spaniards sat on prosing, and smoking, and fighting the French in battles as substantial as the fumes of their tobacco. At length, losing patience, I said to my neighbour,

"At what hour does our worthy host breakfast?"

"Breakfast!" cried the Curate, overhearing the question: "have you not had breakfast?" and calling to the boy at the door, made him fetch me just such another thimbleful of chocolate as had been given to us a couple of hours before. The horrible conviction now flashed upon me, that as these folks eat a prodigious supper late at night, and dine next day at noon no less copiously, they are careless about the best meal in the day; and I learned, practically, and for the first time, the value of Major Dalgetty's praiseworthy maxim on the score of 'Provent,' which enjoins the soldier to lose no opportunity of laying in a complete day's provisions, no matter what the hour may be.

But as I had still much hard work to go through, I could not let things pass at this rate, and therefore, in as good Spanish as I could muster, explained to the old Cura, that our English habits required us to prepare for the day's labour by making a hearty meal in the morning; that, in short, I should be very glad if he could let me have something to eat.

A search for food was accordingly made by the domestics; but the unusual number of guests, and especially my 'tail,' which, for the honour and glory of having an escort, and for no earthly use, I had brought with me from the camp, had swallowed up every vestige of meat in the house. In about an hour, after much hunting, two eggs, boiled to a stone, and a dry crust of stale, sour bread, were placed before me; and I began to think the life of a soldier not half so agreeable as that of a sailor.

It is a happy arrangement of nature, by which most people, upon the whole, are content to remain as they are; or, which comes nearly to the same thing, would not exchange with any other person. I suppose few soldiers would like to change lives with a sailor; and yet it would, perhaps, be easy to show how much better off we are than they, when both parties come to real service. It is a comfortable thing, for example, to know that each one shall have a bed to himself, though the width allowed be only a foot and a half; instead of being packed like red-herrings in a barrel, as we were at the Spanish curate's on the first night of my soldiership. In the next place, we carry not only our provisions with us, but our cooks and kitchens. A clove of garlic dare no more show its head in the galley of a man-of-war, than at a ball-supper prepared by Mr. Gunter.

In more serious matters, too, we have often the advantage over the army. In action, for instance, if a soldier is wounded, he may lie on the field for days; on board ship, he is under the surgeon's

hands in twenty seconds after he is struck, and is then placed in a snug bed, under cover, carefully nursed and protected. Alas! for the wounded soldier in a field that has been well fought, but is afterwards abandoned to the enemy, or to the tender mercies of the peasantry, hardened into marauders by the destruction of their flocks, and herds, and crops, and houses, and the dispersion of their families. The retreat of an army is always so bitter a sacrifice, that its evils are proverbial. Hardly any naval service can be named which is so trying, or so full of hardships. I speak chiefly of the relative comforts of the two services; and in this matter, I think, there can be little question about which has the advantage. It might be instructive, perhaps, to extend this comparison between the two services; but I must resist the temptation to speculate on this topic at present, and return to the poor patriots at Corcubion, over whose unconscious heads the thunder-cloud of war was just about to burst. I have inverted the theatrical order in these matters, and have shown the farce first; the curtain must now draw up to exhibit the tragedy.

CHAPTER XXX.

DESTRUCTION OF CORCUBION.

On returning from the interior on the 9th of April, I found the Endymion still lying in Finisterre Bay, where she had been joined by His Majesty's ship Loire, a frigate despatched from England, with a supply of arms and ammunition expressly for the insurgents of Spain. Her orders had been to sail along the coast, and wherever she found the patriots in force, and willing to receive the proffered assistance, to furnish the inhabitants, as far as might be possible, with the means of annoying the French. When the Loire came off Cape Finisterre, she saw our mast-heads close in with the land. She immediately tacked, and stood in till near enough to show her number, and telegraph the object of her mission; upon which, she was ordered into the bay, as we were the senior officer.

The whole world at Corcubion were thrown into extravagant joy by this unlooked-for piece of good-fortune; and nothing certainly could have been more seasonable than a supply of several thousand muskets, being nearly one for every unarmed peasant at our camp—of those at least who were in some degree organised and drilled. But as there were still upwards of a thousand peasants over and above those formed into corps, and many others were crowding in from the country, it was thought right to despatch the Loire to England for a fresh supply.

The arms and ammunition, being landed in the evening, were placed in a storehouse, ready to be distributed next morning to the troops; and, of course, as there was no longer any cry of 'falta solamente armas,' nothing was talked of but drubbing the French at all points, recapturing Santiago, and, finally, tossing the few invaders who should remain neck and heels over the Pyrenees!

Early next day we proceeded to the shore in great glee, to be present at the grand distribution of arms to the patriots in their camp. The Junta had promised to have everything ready; and from the enthusiasm manifested not only by the troops, but by all other classes, we began to think a new leaf was to be turned over, and that the Spaniards would redeem their waning character; showing the world, after all, of what genuine stuff they were made.

On reaching the council-room, however, where we had reason to expect the Junta in full cavalcade, ready to escort us to the camp, we learned, to our utter astonishment, that the patriotic army, as they were pleased to term it, had broken up that morning at two o'clock, from the camp at Bernun, which lay near to Corcubion, and marched to a place called Paisas, twenty miles further off!

"Well," we exclaimed, "but they have surely taken the new supply of arms with them?"

"No," said a member of the Junta, "there they still lie in their cases, all except a few hundred stand, which they took before marching to Paisas."

"But why, on earth, have they gone from the camp at all? and wherefore unarmed? Where could they have been so advantageously posted as at Bernun?" were some of the numerous questions showered by us on the perfectly unmoved, stately president of the Junta, who listened to all we had to say quite patiently.

When we had done, he took his cigar from his mouth, and, looking exceedingly wise, answered, diplomatically, with a slow shrug of his shoulders, "Quien sabe?" which, being translated, means "Who can tell?" Then, resuming his cigar, and offering us his bunch to choose from, he began to converse about the future campaign, as if he and his precious set of colleagues were fit to bear the weight of mightiest monarchies on their shoulders.

Nothing is so utterly hopeless as the task of making a Spaniard move quickly. It was in vain, therefore, to urge the Junta to send off immediate orders to recall, or, at least, to arrest the troops, till they had arms put in their hands, their cartouche-boxes filled, and their arrangements got into some kind of trim to meet the enemy, should he think of coming down upon them. All we could extract from the Junta was, that as their orders had been given upon solid grounds, they could not be rescinded. Our further efforts, therefore, were directed to precautionary measures; and as the town, which was defenceless in itself, was now left completely open by the removal of the patriots, we entreated the Junta to send out spies and scouts, of their most confidential people, along the road leading from the French head-quarters, that we might have some warning of the enemy's approach. Either to please us, or to get rid of our importunity, they promised to do something of this kind, but never moved another step in the matter.

As the Junta had taken no measures to keep open the communication between the town and their forces, Lieutenant Thruston was sent off to the insurgent head-quarters at Paisas, to render any service to the cause which his talents and activity might bring to bear upon the sadly misdirected fortunes of these poor Spaniards. At all events, it was desirable that some correspondence upon which we could depend should be kept up with the ship; for no reliance whatever, we found, was to be placed on the Spanish accounts sent us

daily from the camp. In the mean time, we assisted the fishermen and more stirring part of the townspeople, in completing the equipment of several gun-boats, which, in the absence of better means, it was thought, might keep the enemy at bay, should they come near the town, as the fire from these vessels commanded the main road for a considerable distance.

These, and all the other precautions we could think of, became every hour more necessary; for reports poured rapidly in from the country, stating that the French had actually moved from Santiago in two divisions, the first of a thousand men, the other of six hundred, and that one of these corps had been seen in full march towards the coast. Still, even when we knew that the enemy was bearing down upon us, we could fall upon no means of rousing the imperturbable Junta to anything like action, or even precaution. They had good mules, and willing men, in abundance, at their command; and yet not one courier could we prevail upon these snail-like statesmen to send out to ascertain the truth of these alarming reports. The oracular Junta declared, that as it was impossible so small a body of French would dare to place themselves between the sea and Paisas, where their patriotic army were now stationed, it was obviously useless to take any measures to ascertain the facts of the case. The whole of these reports were spread, they assured us, by the disaffected, merely to create alarm amongst the inhabitants, and so to lessen their efforts in establishing a force destined very speedily to expel the enemy from their country. In the midst of much doubt as to other points in this history, one thing was quite clear to us, that if the Junta of Corcubion had been the veriest traitors that ever lived, instead of being merely the most sincere, but the most thick-skulled and pig-headed of patriots, they could hardly have played the enemy's game for him more completely than they did.

In the mean time, as these local authorities would not act, we took such measures as we could without directly offending their very touchy pride, and secretly hired men to go along the roads to gain information of the actual state of affairs. Some of our messengers came back to us early next morning, to say that, although they had not seen the French, they were undoubtedly in motion, as the peasantry were flying in all directions, and the smoke of many burning villages could be distinguished far up the valleys—a sure indication, they said, of the enemy's approach. This, we afterwards found, was, in some respects, a piece of exaggeration on the part of our scouts; for we had ample ocular proof that the French knew better what they were about, than to lay a country waste on the advance, over which they meant again to retire. It was only on their return that they spared nothing, carrying fire and sword into every corner.

The captain of the Endymion now became seriously alarmed for the fate of the town he had been called upon to protect. But all he could possibly do was to send a fresh supply of ammunition for the gun-boats, and a message to the Junta, of which I was the bearer, to say, that if they wished it, the frigate should instantly be warped close to Corcubion to cover the escape of the inhabitants; since, from all he could learn, the enemy were coming in such force as to break through and overwhelm the half-armed peasantry at Paisas.

We rowed smartly up the bay, but had scarcely doubled the point of land at the entrance of the harbour, when we observed a sharp cannonading open from the gun-boats stationed near the Santiago road. This fire was promptly returned from the neighbouring heights by a continued discharge of musketry. The enemy, in fact, had pounced, unseen, on their prey; for we could now distinguish the French soldiers pouring into the wretched town from both sides of the valley. Many of the inhabitants rushed to the fishing-boats on the beach, and leaping into them, indiscriminately, pushed into the stream. As we rowed up the harbour, we met hundreds of these poor people, half-dressed, screaming, and struggling hard to get beyond the reach of shot. Others fled along the sides of the hills towards the bay, hoping to be picked off the shore by the boats, or, if they failed in this, to conceal themselves in caves amongst the rocks. Of these fugitives, great numbers were brought down, like hunted deer, or like game in a 'battue,' by the fire of the enemy, whose cruel measures had been taken with so much skill that the devoted town was nearly surrounded before the day broke. The whole face of the little harbour was soon covered with boats flying from this scene of destruction, and happy were those who escaped with their lives. The adjacent banks, too, were crowded with groups of men, women, and children, shrieking in a most touching manner, and entreating their friends to take them into the boats, already over-crowded. So completely hemmed in, however, were these wretched people, that escape was almost impossible. The horror and confusion of this frightful spectacle were increased by the conflagration of the town, in the streets of which deeds of still greater atrocity were going on.

Of course, we could be of no use to such multitudes; fifty such boats as I was in would not have held half the people, and long before the frigate could have entered the harbour all was over. It was evidently too late to be carrying messages to the Junta, who, by this time, were mixed up with the rest of the sufferers in this common calamity. From being, heretofore, the objects of our contempt and ridicule, they now came to share in our compassion, which was all we had to offer to this unhappy spot.

As it was useless to land, I rowed past the flaming town towards the headmost gun-boats, to supply them with ammunition. The sailors were fighting as gallantly as possible; a circumstance which, by the way, offers a curious distinction between these Spanish gun-boatmen and the patriotic troops on shore. The gallantry and steadiness of these people arose, possibly, from their great experience, during the war with England, in the gun-boat service in the Gut of Gibraltar. Not only our merchant-ships, but even large men-of-war, when becalmed in the Straits, were often much harassed by these musquito fleets; and it is probable the greater part of these sailors, who behaved so well at Corcubion, may have served their time at Algeziras, in Gibraltar Bay.

Be the cause what it may, the gun-boats were serving it out very handsomely to the French soldiers as they came round the corner. Unfor-

tunately, the two headmost boats got entangled somehow or other, and the second in the line, not being able to distinguish her consort in the smoke, fired a shot right into the magazine of the vessel a-head of her. In one moment the boat and most of her crew were blown high into the air. We were so near at the instant of this catastrophe, that the fragments fell on board of us; indeed, had we arrived twenty seconds sooner, we must have shared the same fate. We lost no time in distributing the powder with which we were loaded to the other boats, and then busied ourselves in saving such of the blown-up seamen as were swimming about. These poor fellows we carried on board the frigate, and though most of them were in a shocking condition, they all recovered.

Meanwhile, the French made such quick work of their task of destruction, that, as we rowed down the harbour again, they were retiring from the town and re-forming on the road beyond the bend or turn opposite to which the gun-boats were stationed. Though Corcubion was now in flames from end to end, it was easy, amongst the other burning houses, to make out the storehouse, near the beach, in which we had recently deposited about half a million of ball-cartridges, landed from the Loire along with the muskets. The powder was in barrels, to be sure; but we had no idea that this would afford an effectual protection to it against the burning timbers of the roof when it fell in. We observed, at the same time, a body of some eighty or a hundred French soldiers close to the magazine, busily employed in building up our newly-arrived muskets into a great pile, along with doors, window-frames, and other combustibles. When all was completed, the heap was set fire to, amidst the exulting shouts of the invaders, who were seen dancing round it like a parcel of wild Indians after sacking a village. I trust there was nothing unpardonably uncharitable in our devoutly hoping that some happy spark might fall amongst the cartridges in their vicinity, and send this party somewhat faster out of the village than they came into it. We could hardly doubt, indeed, that such would speedily be their fate; for the flaming roof of the magazine had by this time fallen in upon the powder-barrels, and we lay on our oars to enjoy the scatter, which we imagined must take place ere long.

Such are the bitter feelings which this brutal kind of warfare is sure to excite; and I beg to refer any one, who finds fault with the word 'enjoy,' in the above sentence, to the books on the Peninsular war, describing hundreds of scenes not less horrible than this too common-place massacre at Corcubion; and if he can then say that he would not, in such a case, have been pleased to see the whole of this group blown into the air, in the midst of their unhallowed, unsoldier-like, unnecessary scene of butchery, I wish such reader joy of his charity. The sailors in the Endymion's jolly-boat, at all events, had none of this milk of human kindness to spare on the occasion; for as we gave way again past the town, one of the men shook his fist at the troops near the magazine, and exclaimed, with more truth in his figurative language than generally belongs to one of the coarsest of those epithets which sailors are so fond of using,

"You bloody rascals! I only wish the officer would let me land, just to put a match amongst the cartridges close aboard of you; and then how you would spin into the air!"

By this time the shores of the harbour were quite deserted; for such of the inhabitants as had not been put to death had stowed themselves away in holes in the rocks, or were hid in the ravines. With the exception, indeed, of numerous dead bodies, which lay scattered along the banks near the town, no trace of the native population was now to be seen; and I returned on board with no very agreeable story to tell.

While these proceedings were going on, the army of peasants at Paisas got intelligence of the enemy having passed the bridge of Olviera, on their way to Corcubion. In fact, their absurd march from Bernun had left the road as open as any Frenchman could have desired. Whether, if the Spaniards had stayed at Bernun, where they were first stationed, they would, or could, have opposed any effectual resistance to the incursion of the enemy, is very questionable; but nothing was more clear than that, by thus stepping several leagues directly out of the way, they almost invited the French to enter the village. Had our opinion of their wisdom not sunk so very low, we might have suspected them of treachery; but this compliment to their understanding, at the expense of their patriotism, we found it difficult conscientiously to pay the natives.

As the insurgent troops at Paisas had in this way allowed the French to slip past them, their next bright thought was, to make what I believe military men call a flank movement, and thus, by gaining the high road to Santiago, cut off the enemy's retreat, and seize all the troops which had been destroying Corcubion.

"*They* seize that Dervise! seize on Zatanai!"

says the Corsair; and the task in this instance was about as easy.

I have already mentioned that Lieut. Thruston, on the evening before the attack was made, had been despatched to the head-quarters of the patriots to keep up our communications, and, as far as he could, to induce the Spaniards to act with something like system or sense. He had a very difficult, as well as a delicate, game to play, and acquitted himself with great discretion in circumstances of no small intricacy and danger.

He reached Paisas at three o'clock in the morning, after having narrowly escaped being taken prisoner by a body of French dragoons. These troops formed a part of the force sent to destroy Corcubion; and as the whole surrounding country was now aware of the advance of the enemy, Mr. Thruston naturally expected to find the patriots at Paisas under arms, and in great numbers. Instead, however, of the thousands they had been in the habit of talking of, all ready to take the field the instant the French appeared, only forty men could be mustered! All the others had dispersed amongst the neighbouring valleys. Of course, Mr. Thruston urged Lapido the priest, and Camaño the soldier, to collect as many armed men together as they possibly could, and to march instantly to the defence of the town, which he had too good reason to believe would ere long be in flames. He succeeded much better than was usually the case with these slow-moving gentlemen, and, in the course of a few hours' march, his force was aug-

mented to four or five hundred men, nearly all with muskets in their hands. It need hardly be mentioned that the division of our grand army, usually the most busy in spouting patriotism at the camp, with only pikes, scythes, and ploughshares in their hands, were all gone, never to form again.

By dint of hard marching, Lieutenant Thruston managed to bring the insurgent forces to the top of the high ground which overlooks Corcubion, about the time when the French, fatigued with burning, murdering, and plundering, were drawing off from the town. When the enemy's troops reached the foot of the hill, from the top of which the Spaniards were contemplating the destruction of their homes, the French infantry very coolly sat down on the grass to rest from their labours; the cavalry dismounted quite at their ease, as if in perfect security, though it was clear they must have seen the ridge of the hill covered with armed patriots.

Now was the moment, thought Mr. Thruston, to make a rush down upon the wearied invaders, for the position gave the Spaniards every possible advantage over their enemies; and if the patriots had possessed any degree of firmness or good discipline, the French, who were not one quarter so numerous, might certainly have been overthrown, and, possibly, taken prisoners. The zealous Lapido thought so too; and, being heartily seconded by Camaño, the patriots were ordered to advance to the attack, but not to waste their fire till they came quite close to the enemy, and, indeed, rather to trust to the effect of the rush down hill, and to the vigour of their arms in the use of the bayonet, than to the fire of their musketry.

There was a great cheering of Viva! viva! upon these orders being given, and the Spaniards moved on to the charge in a style worthy of the days of their own Cid Campeador. But this lasted only till they came within about a couple of gun-shots of the French troops, upon which, in spite of all the officers could do, the patriots halted, and commenced a brisk fire directed towards the enemy; who took no more notice of the circumstance than a great mastiff or Newfoundlander does of the harmless yelping of a dozen puppy-dogs, ready to turn tail the instant they see their antagonist prick up his ears.

I am ashamed to say, this humiliating figure too well describes the proceedings of our patriotic allies—good men and true, I doubt not, if properly disciplined, and commanded by officers they had long known, and learned to confide in; but, when brought together in this way, by mere alarm, they were fit for none of the purposes of real war. Accordingly, it was now observable that more than half their number had gone off to the rear, under the pretence of their ammunition being expended; while those who remained merely loaded and fired off their pieces in the direction of the distant enemy, to the great waste of powder and ball, but without working the smallest mischief on their foes. The manner in which they made their own personal assurance doubly sure in this matter was described as being ludicrous enough. They first ran to the brow of the hill, from whence they got a glimpse of the enemy, sitting at his ease in a field a quarter of a mile off, and then having fired, ran back again a hundred yards, to reload in security!

This sham fighting lasted for nearly half-an-hour, when the French, who by this time had taken sufficient rest, and drawn together their scattered forces, rose from the ground, buckled on their great-coats and knapsacks, but without any fuss, or seeming to care one straw about the Spaniards, and advanced slowly up the hill, directly in the face of the patriots' fire. At the first symptom of a movement on the part of the enemy, one half of the few Spaniards who still remained on the top of the hill turned to the right about, and fled to the mountains, notwithstanding the commands and entreaties of their officers, whom Mr. Thruston described as having stood gallantly enough. When the French came within musket-shot, they threw forward some sharp-shooters, who commenced firing on the Spaniards. I need hardly add, that the greater number of the sadly-reduced forces of the patriots now took to their heels. About this time several of the natives were struck down, upon which the rout became so general, that the two chiefs and the British officer soon found themselves quite alone on the top of the ridge, with not a single man of all their grand army in sight!

There was now, of course, nothing left for it but 'sauve qui peut;' so the old priest, accompanied by his brave fellow-soldier, and followed by the British lieutenant, turned about their horses, and galloped off likewise. Fortunately for them, the French cavalry were either so much fagged by the night's march, or sated with the work of destruction in the morning, that they considered it not worth while to engage in the pursuit. Be the cause what it may, the French made no attempt to catch the fugitives, but, turning into the main road, went off towards Santiago, from whence they came. Lieutenant Thruston, after encountering great hardships, and making some hair-breadth escapes, contrived to reach the coast, and eventually to get on board his own ship.

Thus ended the renowned battle of Corcubion, which the no-less-renowned Junta of that city ever afterwards spoke of as a victory.

Throughout the whole affair which has just been described, the French, it will be observed, treated the peasantry with a degree of contempt, which showed how much better these veteran invaders were aware of the utter insignificance of such loosely-organised forces than we strangers had been. I suspect it is only behind walls, amidst the mountains, or in the fastnesses of a forest, that mere peasantry can ever act with any hope of advantage against regulars; and the reason is very obvious. To impart to bodies of men what is called military strength, there must be order of some sort. Discipline, or, in other words, systematic habits of prompt, unreflecting obedience, confirmed by long-continued practice, producing confidence in one another and in their chiefs, can alone give that efficient description of order which belongs to regular troops. With thorough-bred soldiers this system is found to be equally efficacious in a plain as in a closed fortification, in the exultation of advance, or in the despondency of a retreat. On the other hand, irregularly-organised bodies of men, who have

little confidence in their companions, still less in themselves, and not much more in their officers, and who have had no experience either of the dangers of war or of the chances of escape, require something extrinsic to produce that degree of exact order, which appears to be quite essential to military strength.

The darkness and intricacy of the cork forests of Spain, or the height and rugged nature of their snowy sierras, gave unbounded confidence to the guerillas, while the talents and enterprise of various distinguished leaders inspired respect for them amongst their followers. Many rude combinations were afterwards established by these chiefs, which, although they fell far short of the systematic organisation of regular war, came more or less within the definition of order; and the result, we all know, was of the highest importance in the great Peninsular contest.

But the most striking examples of the efficacy of mere order, considered both in its mechanical and in its moral sense, are furnished by those cases where the Spaniards established themselves behind walls, or barricaded themselves in streets, as at Saragossa. The simple circumstance of having a visible line chalked out to the whole body, along which it becomes each man's individual as well as collective duty to stand firm, gives the semblance, and indeed the reality, of system. To such an extent will this take place, that if there be only superadded some few advantageous circumstances, a body of totally undisciplined men will often act as efficiently as if they had been trained to the highest degree of discipline. But in open plains, where the whole scheme of military order is of a moral description, and where there is no definite course of action obvious to the sense of every person, the very same men who behind a wall had never flinched, would probably not stand for an instant against regular troops.

The American militia, at New Orleans, when placed behind a very insignificant breast-work, which afforded them little or no protection, and a ditch of only a few feet in width, stood firm to a man, and gallantly repulsed an attack made by highly-disciplined troops. But the result might have proved very different, if the sagacity of the accomplished general who commanded the Americans had not been proof against the solicitations of his successful, but unorganised militia, who eagerly desired to be led forward into the open fields, where the English regulars were drawn up in order.

In short, all experience shows, that it is idle to talk of the bravery of irregular troops. The moral courage, indeed, of an officer, or of any other gentleman, being derived from principle and from the habits belonging to intellectual cultivation, is a different affair entirely from what is meant when the word is applied to masses of uneducated or low-bred men. If it be of the true stamp, it is liable to none of the ebbs and flows just alluded to, and, consequently, endures through every change of circumstance.

The French, after the skirmish of the morning near Corcubion—if a contest deserves that name, where all the fighting was on one side—retired about three leagues to a place called Hopital, where they regaled themselves at the expense of the wealthier inhabitants. They slept there, and in the morning, in testimony of their gratitude for the night's lodging, or, as they said, to punish the inhabitants for flying away from them, burned down the houses. Some of the people, indeed, who had been fool-hardy enough to remain, the day before, on the approach of the enemy, were cut down at their own doors. In this reckless manner the division of troops returned to Santiago, quite unmolested, burning every village on their way back, and laying waste the country in every possible manner. There were no fewer than five priests of different parishes, and several hundreds of peasants, both male and female, put to death on this unfortunate occasion; and, amongst the number, my worthy friend the Curate, at whose house I slept when sent to explore the passes of the mountains. In short, they spared nobody they could lay their swords upon; their object being to strike terror into the souls of the inhabitants of the surrounding country, and, by the fearful example of poor Corcubion, to teach the inhabitants of the adjacent districts no longer to trifle with their requisitions.

CHAPTER XXXI.

CONSEQUENCES OF FOREIGN INVASION.

Early on the day after Corcubion was sacked, we sent boats to assist those inhabitants who had escaped the slaughter, and to ascertain what was become of the powder we had left there, which had evidently not been reached by the flames, otherwise we must have heard the explosion. On landing at the wharf, near which the magazine was situated, we observed that the roof had fallen in. As the beams were still smoking, it became a matter of no small difficulty to determine what should be done in order to withdraw the powder, for it was no joke to be stepping about amongst burning timbers, on the tops of barrels filled with ball cartridges!

Whilst we were consulting together upon this matter, some of the sailors, unseen by us, had forced the door, and with that reckless sort of sang-froid which makes all kinds of danger equally indifferent to them, commenced pitching the scorched beams out of the windows. Perhaps these proceedings ought to have been stopped; for a single spark communicating by a crevice to the powder in any one of the barrels would have blown the entire party, sailors, officers, boats and all, into the air. The service, however, was entered upon, and we let it continue till the whole platform was cleared of the half-extinguished rafters. The barrels were then carefully removed; and, what was very odd, and sufficiently startling, several of them were actually smoking, and so much charred on the upper side, that a slight degree of pressure of the finger made the wood crumble down amongst the cartridges. One of these barrels, I remember, was kept by the captain, for a long time afterwards, as a curiosity. The number of musket-ball cartridges in this store-house was upwards of three hundred thousand, so that the scatter which an explosion must have caused would have been somewhat serious.

The town itself presented a most melancholy spectacle; though a scene which description can

but feebly paint. Such of the wretched inhabitants as had not been put to death were gradually returning to their homes, that is, to the bare walls of their houses. Nothing was heard but weeping and wailing in every quarter. Numerous families who, up to this time, had been in flourishing circumstances, but whose numbers were thinned by the massacre of the preceding day, and who were now totally ruined, seated themselves in silence near the smoking embers of their former dwelling-places. A drizzling rain was falling, which added to the discomfort of these houseless and miserable people. It was quite calm, and, as few persons were stirring about, the ear could catch the sound of a general moan along the streets, from many parts of which the smoke was still rising, in straight columns, high into the air.

My orders were, to offer the inhabitants every assistance in the way of clothing and provisions that the ship could afford; and I was just mentioning to some one that we could also lend medical aid, if it were required, when a poor woman, catching indistinctly at the words I had spoken, ran eagerly up to me, and falling on her knees, pressed my hand to her lips, and wept over it bitterly. She was strangely dressed, her clothes being merely thrown over her shoulders, and knotted in front; while her hair, left to fly loose, fell over her neck in great disorder. She wore no shoes or stockings; and her countenance, as well as manner, and her language too, conspired to give an idea of insanity, which I thought it by no means improbable this horrible scene of butchery might have produced. She spoke so quickly and incoherently, that for some time I could not discover what she wished me to do. At length, when the first torrent of her grief was over, and she seemed quite exhausted, I entreated her to speak a little slower, and promised to assist her to the utmost of my power. This she tried to do, and I at last made out that her daughter had either been killed by the French, or now lay wounded at her house. In order to see if my conjecture were right, I offered to accompany her to where her daughter lay. I had no sooner spoken than she started up, expressed her joy at having fallen in with me, and away she dragged me, over the ruins, and through crowds of weeping natives, to the only house that remained unburned in that street. The door was open, and she hurried me up stairs into a large darkened apartment, round which were seated eight or ten persons, all silent, and most of them in tears.

While I was wondering where this strange adventure was to end, she drew me to a small recess in the corner, in which lay a female figure stretched on a low bed, saying, as she presented me,

"My daughter, here is the English doctor come to visit you!"

The cause of the poor old lady's joy and agitation was now apparent; she had set out in quest of medical assistance, and fancying, from what I had let fall, that I was the surgeon of the frigate, had hurried me off, without giving me time to explain that I could be of no use to her.

The poor daughter, a pretty young woman of sixteen or eighteen, seemed to guess the truth, for she looked up from her death-bed in my face, and shook her head; saying, with a smile, that it was very good in me to take so much trouble.

I may here observe, that I hardly remember to have seen a Spaniard, to whatever extremity reduced, forget what was due to good-breeding. I do not mean to speak of the artificial politeness which deals in mere forms, and goes no deeper than the external surface of character; but to that genuine affability, or wish to please and to be pleased, which, from being cultivated on principle, and practised as a duty at all times, becomes a part of the character, and, so far from being strained, really affords the most easy and natural form of expression that can be used. This habitual recollection of the feelings of others which distinguishes the Spaniards, certainly covers a multitude of their sins.

I was a little perplexed at first what to say or do, but thought there could be no harm in begging to know how the case stood. The girl described to me, "that a soldier had fired at her, and shot her in such a way that the ball passed completely through both legs, thus forming four different external wounds!" The mother stood by the bedside, with her hands clasped, watching for the effect which this communication was to make upon the person she supposed to be the doctor. When I declared that such a case was far beyond my skill, and that, in fact, I was not the English surgeon, the poor woman gave a faint cry, and fell back in a chair completely broken-hearted. All I could say would not comfort her in the least; and therefore, after telling her friends, and the wounded girl herself, that the doctor should be sent for instantly, I left the house, but only to witness scenes of still greater horror. Very few of these things, it will easily be understood, are fit for description: for in every quarter of the town the dead and the dying were scattered about, and mixed indiscriminately with the pigs, cows, and poultry, all of which had been shot by the soldiers, apparently in mere wantonness.

I sent on board the Endymion for one of the medical men, who landed shortly afterwards; but the poor girl died while he was examining her wounds.

Six or eight buildings only out of several hundred were left undestroyed in all the town; but before any attempt was made to restore their dwellings, the first care of the Spaniards, after the departure of the French, was to collect, and expose in the church, the bodies of the unfortunate victims to the barbarity of their enemy. By some strange chance, it could hardly, I fear, be from any scruple, this church was one of the few buildings left untouched.

Besides the bodies collected in the town, many more were brought in carts from the adjacent country, and placed by the side of the others. The object of this terrible spectacle was, to enable the friends of the deceased the better to recognise the features of their relatives. The search which was made during the whole of this day and the next, amongst these mangled remains, by the surviving husbands and wives, parents and children, was the most afflicting example of the miseries of war that can well be imagined. The uncertainty which prevailed amongst the returning inhabitants as to the fate of their companions, from whom they had been separated by this sudden inroad of the enemy, was not the least painful part of this scene; and I am not sure that their grief was greater when

the fatal issue was fully ascertained, than whilst the mournful search was going on. At all events, it made less show in the expression; for the Spaniards, above most people I have seen, are dignified in their sorrow when the worst is known.

I remember being much struck with one circumstance of this sad exhibition, which told its story but too well. Most, if not all, of the bodies exposed in the church were either stabbed or deeply cut across their fingers and wrists; indicating, apparently, that, when in the act of supplication, they had been sabred or bayoneted by the invaders. Their wretched hands, being naturally held up to defend their heads, were the first to receive the blows aimed at more vital parts.

I need scarcely say that this scene of bloodshed and licence presented many other examples of horror which it would answer no purpose to relate. Enough, however, has probably been detailed to show how different an affair the actual presence of war is from what it seems when viewed through the brilliant medium of a Gazette. In that case, a battle, or the sacking of a town, has something of a picturesque effect—wild, indeed, and confused, like that curious variety of the mirage called the Fata Morgana, in which towers and temples, shipping and green fields, are made to fill the air, along with fragments of trees, and portions of the sky. In like manner, the false conceptions which we form at a distance of any military exploit are produced by something of the same kind—the varied nature of the medium through which the facts reach us. The truth is, that those persons who are actually engaged in battles or sieges are too much taken up with the details of their own duty, to have any general conception of what is going on; while those who superintend the whole must not allow themselves to be distracted by particular incidents, however striking. And as amateurs are seldom to be found on such occasions with leisure to record those minute circumstances which might assist the imagination, or to combine them by aid of such general views as would prevent things running into confusion, we are left very much to the fancy of poets, or the skill of panorama-painters, whose sole object is to produce what they call effect.

When I entered the church at Corcubion, the whole floor of which was paved with this frightful mosaic of dead bodies, while its roofs were ringing with the groans and shrieks of the survivors, I came to new conceptions of such matters; and could not help thinking how salutary a lesson it might prove, if witnessed by those more fortunate people from whose doors all the greater evils and sacrifices of war have been for ages removed.

That our contributions of this description in England have been heavy, cannot be denied, or that their pressure exists still, when the war is over. But, even if they were much more burdensome, they ought to be considered a cheap alternative for the bitter miseries which the actual presence of fire and sword would have brought in their train; and the reversion of security which we are now enjoying, when so many other countries are distracted, and some of them ruined, may surely be looked upon as well worth the money we are paying for it.

The advantages which sprung out of the successful war against Buonaparte may be estimated, by conceiving, for a moment, what must have been our fate had he succeeded. In the mean time, our national independence, and the numberless other blessings which could not exist without that independence, are as entire now as ever they were, or perhaps more so; and since these inestimable benefits are not only enjoyed by the present generation, but will descend, and be equally enjoyed by many generations yet to come, both we and they are justly called upon to contribute a fair proportion of the purchase-money. Our great political Estate, as it may be called, has been secured to the national family by means of a vast outlay of capital in times past; and shall we, the present heirs of entail, who are in the entire exercise of all the rights and privileges, and of the uninterrupted enjoyment of the benefits so purchased, think it hard that we should pay the interest of a debt contracted to secure such objects in perpetuity? If, in addition to this obvious position, it could be shown, as I am strongly inclined to believe it may be, however paradoxical it will appear to some people, that this very national debt contributes not only to the stability of our institutions, but to the virtue, strength, and happiness, of the people at large, a material step would be made in reconciling us to the evils by which the collection of the revenue is attended. This, however, is perhaps not the fittest place for such a discussion, though it may be one suitable enough for reminding the people of this country, that of all the nations engaged in the late arduous struggle, England has been the greatest gainer by the successful result, and her inhabitants by far the most inconsiderable sufferers during the contest.

As the army of Corcubion was now completely dispersed, the town itself, with most of the neighbouring villages destroyed, and many of the principal inhabitants, as well as great numbers of the lower classes, put to the sword, it was natural to conclude, that this unfortunate district would at length submit quietly to the French. But those who reason thus know little of the indomitable spirit of the Spaniard, who is a person not easily crushed, and who, though he may move out of the way of immediate danger, when untrained to stand fire, cannot be cowed by mere threats, or permanently intimidated by acts of vengeance wreaked on his friends. There is a point, indeed, as we afterwards found, at which even his noble spirit will bend, if it do not absolutely break; but this was not yet reached in the instance before us, for the invaders had not left the smoking town above four-and-twenty hours before most of our opinionated old friends, the Junta, re-assembled, under a temporary shed, and went to work again with wars and rumours of war, projects of future campaigns, and of present revenge, just as if nothing had happened to disturb their councils, and entirely to overturn their combinations!

Had the talents and experience of these inimitable Dons borne any tolerable proportion to their perseverance and their unsubdued pride, Buonaparte and his legions of 'devils incarnate,' as the vindictive ladies of Corcubion always called the invaders, might have been subdued much sooner than they were. But even this self-confidence of the Spaniards, or national arrogance, or whatever name it deserve, was certainly the eventual cause

of the expulsion of the French; and it would inevitably have led, sooner or later, to that consummation, even had they not been assisted by us. It might possibly have cost them half a century; or the war have taken the hereditary character of the old Moorish contest; but Spain would never, I believe, under any circumstances, have yielded completely to a foreign yoke. Like the volcano of their own Teneriffe, the actual eruptions might have intermitted for long periods; but the nation would never have entirely lost its explosive character.

In the mean time, some division took place in the councils of these redoubtable statesmen at Corcubion. There were two parties; one of which had lost everything by the late visit of the French; the other, which had still some property to lose, and could count some relatives unmurdered. Those who had lost all were hot for war; and so in fact were the others, but with this difference. The ruined citizens were for beginning again instantly, and with most unwonted energy; the Junta actually prepared a proclamation, calling together those peasants who had saved their arms, to avenge the insults and wrongs put upon them by the enemy. The other party merely wished to pause a while; 'mañana' was their word; 'poco a poco,' little by little; "let us wait till the French meet with some reverse elsewhere, and are obliged to withdraw their head-quarters further off, when we can hope to harass them on their retreat, and, by taking them at an advantage, outmatch their discipline by numbers; or, by a more intimate knowledge of the passes, waylay and punish them in detail."

We were not invited, as far as I recollect, to take any share in these deliberations; indeed, it would have been a tolerable puzzle what to have advised. I think we should have taken the side of those who recommended delay, considering the sound drubbing the cause had met with, under circumstances much more advantageous than any we could hope soon to see again.

The Spaniards, as they generally do at moments when advice might be most useful, took their own line; and before night the warlike proclamation was issued, calling upon the troops scattered in the late 'victory' to re-assemble in the market-place of Corcubion. But, for all this, during the whole of the next day not one man appeared; and the object of the French, in striking terror into the district, seemed to be answered.

The warlike part of the Junta who had gained the day in the discussion, aided by Camaño, the only real soldier amongst them, now made an application to the captain of the Endymion; and, taking advantage of the offer he had incautiously, but very naturally, made at the moment of their greatest extremity, they claimed the fulfilment of his promise to bring the frigate into the inner harbour, abreast of the town. This step they assured him, must restore confidence to the inhabitants, who would then speedily re-assemble, while an apprehension of the ship's broadside might keep the enemy at a distance.

The position in which the captain was now placed became extremely awkward; for the appeal of the Spaniards, whose revolt he had been in some degree instrumental in sustaining, could not be lightly dealt with; yet he well knew that his co-operation would avail *nothing* against the French, if they chose to return in force. Such indeed was the nature of the ground, being everywhere high and bold, that troops might easily form close at hand, without being exposed to the fire of the ship. Besides which, as the town was already destroyed, or nearly so, it was really of little use to defend it further. But this last difficulty the Spaniards obviated by saying, they meant to build it up again as soon as they were assured of the protection of their allies.

The most serious objection, however, to the measure which the Spaniards urged upon us, was the extreme danger to which His Majesty's ship must be exposed by entering a narrow harbour, completely commanded by heights, to which she could not elevate her guns, but where an enemy, not resisted by military, might take up a position at any moment, and thence, by means of artillery, knock a ship to pieces at their leisure. Added to this, there was a powerful battery at the entrance of the harbour, sufficient of itself to stop a much larger ship than the Endymion, wishing to sail out. Of course the Spaniards undertook to garrison this fort; but we had seen too much of the distinction which these warriors made between promise and performance, to think of relying upon such an engagement.

Nevertheless, as there would have been some indelicacy in making difficulties dependent upon our own chance of danger, and as it appeared to be an object of some consequence to show how truly the English were in earnest in the common cause, it was determined to run the hazard of bringing the ship into harbour. On the 17th of April, accordingly, we sailed in, and moored close off the town. On that very day the wind chopped round to the southward, and in the evening it blew very hard, so much so, that had we been then assailed by a skilful enemy, possessed of the heights, and furnished with guns, and troops enough to prevent our landing, we must either have been sunk at our anchors, or have surrendered at discretion, after the greater number of the crew had been killed. To have beat out against such a breeze would have been totally impossible. The critical nature of our situation now became so apparent to every one on board, that the news, which heretofore flew about unheeded, began to possess a wonderfully enlarged importance in our eyes. Our duties also necessarily assumed a character of earnestness which it was scarcely possible to give them before. In fact, with the exception of the burning of the town, and its attendant misery, all the rest of the campaign had seemed to us more like playing at war than real fighting.

Now, however, that we had brought our ship within range of the enemy's shot, it became of consequence to establish for ourselves something like a proper system on shore; and for this purpose Lieutenant Thruston, who enjoyed as much of the confidence of the Spaniards as any foreigner can ever hope to gain, and who had by this time become personally acquainted with the useful men amongst them, endeavoured to rally their forces, and once more to muster them in strength.

I ought to have mentioned, that before entering the harbour we took the liberty of disarming the

battery at the entrance, by pitching its guns into the sea—some eight or ten long 24-pounders; a proceeding to which the Spaniards reluctantly consented; but it was evident the ship could not otherwise have been safe one hour, for the fort was assailable from the land side, and must have yielded to the French in a moment.

On the second day after the proclamation was circulated, not fewer than a hundred armed peasants assembled in the market-place, full of vivas! and ardour, and declaring that the rest of their companions in arms were hastening to the re-erected standard of glory, and so forth.

Contrary to expectation, these shouts were coldly received by the inhabitants. The citizens of Corcubion said little, shrugged their shoulders, tossed their cloaks over their left arms, smoked their cigars, and merely muttered 'paciencia!' But the women—perhaps the only sensible people amongst them—soon became so clamorous against any farther show of military resistance, that the troops were removed by Camaño to a strong position about two miles distant, where it was said the rest of the army would speedily assemble. Meanwhile the anti-military tumult, got up by the women, increased to such a degree in the town, that in the course of the evening the Junta were obliged to take down their warlike address. A deputation, it seems, of the principal inhabitants, stimulated chiefly by the females, had waited upon the Junta to say, that unless every show of resistance to the French were for the present abandoned, the whole of the said Junta would certainly be put to death in the course of the night. The corporate body in charge of the public affairs knew their countrymen too well to trifle with such a formal communication, so down came the address.

We were, of course, very much provoked with the Junta for yielding so pusillanimously to what we then called mere clamour. But certainly nothing could be more judicious than the conduct of the ladies. And what can show more completely how the enthusiasm of the moment may blind the judgment to the most obvious truths, than the fact of our thinking these people unreasonable for not again resisting by force of arms an enemy who had proved himself many hundredfold too powerful for them?

Whatever the Junta thought, we could not doubt that the French, by means of their spies, would soon gain intelligence of the frigate being in the inner harbour; and as we knew too well by this time that there was nothing to check their proceedings, we had only to keep a sharp look-out, and be ready to give them a warm reception, if they took the low road, or to get out of their way as fast as possible if they came round by the heights. In any view, it was clear that the ship was in a most awkward scrape; for it appeared quite obvious that, without some force on shore to act in concert with us, we could do the patriot cause no good, still less be of service to the poor inhabitants, already well nigh ruined. Indeed our presence seemed calculated only to draw down fresh vengeance on them. Neither could we, with any decency, retire from the harbour without some ostensible cause, though it was impossible not to feel out of our element, jammed up in this fashion, at the top of a harbour where we could not act, and where our influence, once paramount, appeared to be now totally gone.

On the morning of the 18th of April, just as the day broke, the first scene of the recent tragedy was acted over again; the whole harbour was once more covered with boats, crowded with the inhabitants flying from the town, while all the roads were choked with fugitives as before. No enemy being in sight, we felt disposed to ascribe this to some panic; but, on sending a boat to inquire, we learned that a peasant had arrived with news of a large French force being again near the town, accompanied by a train of heavy cannon. This sounded disagreeable enough; but still no troops could be seen from the ship; and the inference was, that the French were making a sweep round the hill, in order to gain the heights lying between the frigate and the harbour's mouth, from which their guns might command the passage, and cut off all retreat.

The incomparable Junta, however, who were still at their post, smoking their cigars, declared positively, that having examined the people who spread the alarm, they had ascertained there was not a word of truth in these reports. They had deceived us and their townsfolks so completely once before, that little or no reliance could be placed upon these worthies now. But at this moment Camaño came on board, to say that he had himself looked along the Santiago road from a commanding station, and that no troops were to be seen. This assurance, coming from an old soldier, and a man of business, in whom we had all confidence, served to dissipate any idea of the frigate being engaged in such a hopeless contest. Had the French artillery once gained the grounds above us, and near the entrance, our fate must have been sealed.

Just as the conclusion had been come to, that there was no enemy likely to take us unawares, a cannon-shot, fired from the shore, whistled over the heads of the officers, and, passing between the masts, fell beyond the ship. Before the glasses could be turned to the spot from whence the shot came, another well-directed gun was fired; but, fortunately for us, not from the heights. In the next minute the whole ridge was bristling and alive with French infantry, marching, at double-quick time, to gain the cliffs overhanging the narrowest part of the harbour, from which position they might have fired on the ship's decks with their musketry as she passed. A similar body of men were proceeding with equal celerity along the opposite or eastern side of the harbour, accompanied by artillery, which were galloping furiously forwards, some to gain the dismantled battery at the entrance, and others to perch themselves on the most commanding cliffs, and other points least within range of the ship's guns.

All the enemy's measures, up to a certain point, had been so well taken, that, but for their impatience, it is hard to say how the frigate could have escaped capture, or entire destruction. Had the French only kept out of sight, and refrained from firing at all, till their heavy guns were brought round to the proper situations for attacking us, and if the infantry had been kept behind the ridge till the ship, in leaving the harbour approached close to the shore, they might have nabbed us. For their musketry, fired from the

high banks, and from behind walls, could easily have picked off every one who showed his head above the bulwark; while it would have been almost impossible for our marines to have struck a man of theirs, hid as they might have been amongst the rocks. None of our great guns could have been elevated, at the same time, to reach their artillery.

But it seemed as if the officer in command of that detachment of guns sent to the eastern side of the harbour, could not resist the temptation of a shot when he first came in sight of the Endymion, which ship, as we afterwards learned from a prisoner, they already considered their prize. If musketry only had been fired at the town, or at the gun-boats, we must, according to our promise, have remained to assist the inhabitants; and in this way the French could have occupied our attention, until their guns were so placed that our escape might have been rendered well nigh impossible.

Whatever was the cause, however, whether it were bad generalship, which is not likely, or merely impatience on the part of the officer, which is more probable, these indiscreetly managed shot, by giving us timely warning, saved our good frigate from being pounded to pieces.

The gun-boats, stationed off the beach, were soon driven back by the fire of several hundred men, also accompanied by field-pieces. The troops then entered the ruined town; but the unfortunate inhabitants had already escaped over the hills or in boats. There was nothing left, therefore, for the ship to protect; and, of course, she made sail out of the harbour as fast as possible. Had the wind blown from the southward as hard as on the day before, the French might have taken their position and demolished us at leisure; but fortunately the wind was fair, and their utmost speed was insufficient to gain the narrows before the ship reached the entrance. She then sailed past unmolested, except by the distant artillery, which were fired briskly, in hopes, no doubt, of bringing down a mast or a yard, and so retarding our progress till the great body of the troops came near enough to act with effect.

It is difficult, at this distance of time, to understand how we could ever have consented to place ourselves in a situation where everything was to be lost, and nothing gained; and where, without efficient co-operation on shore, it was utterly impossible we could maintain ourselves an hour against a force which we knew the French had at command. Certain it is, however, that being infected with the enthusiasm of the day, we were willing, and perhaps it was our duty, to risk a good deal, rather than have our sincerity called in question, by throwing cold water on a cause then on the tip-top of its popularity in England. So completely was the captain determined to act in good faith with the Spaniards, that he not only brought the frigate into the inner harbour, but likewise, at the suggestion of the Junta, ordered in the French ship captured by Lieutenant Thruston at Camariñas. This advice, or request of the local authorities, coupled with some other circumstances, looked, it must be owned, very like treachery; and, indeed, there was hardly a doubt left on our minds afterwards, that the whole of the last set of measures was a trap to catch the frigate and her prize. But the wretched Junta, we had reason to believe, were made the dupes, not the parties, to this intrigue, of which we were to have become the victims. It has been seen that a mere accident saved us; but the French measures, in everything else, were so admirably taken, that even at a moment when we were making no very pleasant figure before them, it was impossible not to admire the skill with which they carried on the war.

I speak not, of course, of their brutal destruction of Corcubion, or the wanton slaughter of the unarmed inhabitants; these proceedings were not only cruel, but ill-judged, because useless, and contributing in no respect to the advancement of military objects; but, on the contrary, interfering with them by still further exasperating the inhabitants. Under such a system, ten times as great a force as the French marched into Spain could not have subdued the country. But nothing could be more ably managed than their second expedition to Corcubion, excepting the casual indiscretion of firing too soon, which put us on our guard. We had many scouts along the roads; and the inhabitants of the town were by this time well aware of the necessity of keeping a sharp look-out; yet, for all this, a considerable body of troops, with guns to retard them, had almost pounced upon us before we had the slightest warning of their having left head-quarters.

Fortunately, our prize had not been brought into the scrape likewise. I forget why she had not entered the harbour on the same day with the frigate; but certainly this did not arise from any distrust on our part. Indeed, just before the attack was made upon the Endymion by the troops, I hsd been sent for the express purpose of moving the captured ship from Finisterre Bay to Corcubion Harbour. We had unmoored the prize, and were about to trip the second anchor, when we saw the fishing-boats, as upon the former occasion, crowded with people, hurrying out of the harbour's mouth, and all the heights along the bay covered with the inhabitants in full flight. Presently the sound of firing was heard; this was from the artillery which had got sight of the frigate. Then there appeared a rush of the gun-boats, driven back by the fire of the troops; and lastly, came sailing out of the harbour the pretty Endymion herself, though in rather a shabby plight, I must own, with an escort of flying artillery on each side of her, followed by two bodies of troops, scrambling and running along the rocks, just too late to catch their prey.

In the course of half-an-hour, the two ships, the frigate and her prize, were safely anchored in the middle of the bay; and we could see the baffled enemy looking at us, we may suppose with very wistful eyes. About this time one of the Spanish boats came alongside, with two or three French prisoners taken by the natives in a wine-house on the road. These men reported that the force brought against us in the morning consisted of between two and three thousand men, with a considerable number of their heaviest guns; the sole object of the expedition being the capture of the frigate, and the recapture of the Camariñas ship. It was believed in the army, they added, that both ships were in the inner harbour; and the promise of the prize-money was held out to the troops as a motive to their secrecy and expedition. They

seemed to be well aware that it was essential to their success to get round the corner, and establish themselves near the harbour's mouth, before being seen from the frigate.

I need scarcely add, that the French now completed those parts of the work of destruction left unfinished at their former visit. The church, no longer respected, was first plundered, and then burned, as well as the few houses that had escaped before; and all the temporary roofs put up by the wretched inhabitants on their bare walls were torn down. After this the enemy fell back upon Santiago; and the poor Spaniards returned once more to their ruined houses. We did everything we possibly could to alleviate their distress, by supplying them with provisions and clothes, and helping to repair their dwellings. But there was, of course, no more talk of resistance; indeed, we never afterwards beheld one soldier of all our patriot army; nor, it must be acknowledged, after the poor success of their exertions, were we inclined to encourage such premature and inadequate attempts at stemming the torrent.

The unhappy Junta were hunted about the country like wild beasts by the French cavalry; and, a high price being put on their heads, they were at length glad to seek refuge on board the Endymion. About thirty persons in all, including the wives, children, and attendants of the different members of the corporation, availed themselves of our protection. We built them up a large cabin on the main-deck, made the party as comfortable as we could, and, at their own request, landed them at Vigo some days afterwards; for they deemed it most prudent to keep at a distance from home for a time. Besides which, as we had only five days' provisions left on board, we could remain no longer near Corcubion, and at last took our leave of that unfortunate spot, with very different feelings from those with which we made its acquaintance a few weeks before.

It is curious that, from that hour to this, I have never been able to learn what was the subsequent fate of Corcubion, or whether it flourishes, or even exists still. As I have said before, it is one of the peculiarities of our naval ramblings, that we form the closest intimacies, swear the most eternal friendships, and then hoist sail, never to see or hear of our dear friends again. A sailor's heart has not inaptly, though somewhat ingloriously, been compared to a pin-cushion, stuck full of small darts, which he gets replenished at every port, and pulls out again in the interval, nothing the worse!

Yet there was one person at Corcubion, a female too, whom none of us can easily forget, although I am sorry to say I have no recollection of her name. She was of low estate, but the true Castilian blood must have flowed in her veins.

During the period of our fancied security at Corcubion, the officers, as usual, sent their clothes on shore to be washed. It so chanced, that the captain's stock, from being much the largest, had not been sent back at the time of the last French incursion, though most of the officers' things had been received. The captain naturally enough gave up his linen as lost; and was even ashamed to ask about it, seeing that the inhabitants were not only burned out of house and home, but had been stripped of everything they possessed in the world. His Spanish laundress, however, by loading her children's shoulders, and her own, with the half-washed linen, just as the French were entering the town, contrived not only to carry the clothes safely away, but to hide them in a cave near the beach. Meanwhile, her house, and every article belonging to herself, was burned. Nevertheless, after the French retired, she managed to get the linen properly done up, and, having brought it all on board, quietly counted it out, piece by piece, never seeming to imagine she had done anything remarkable, or that she was entitled to make a greater demand than the bare price of her labour!

CHAPTER XXXII.

JACK'S ALLOWANCE.

THE moment of Noon is the most important of all the grand epochs which mark the progress of time on board ship. It commences our day in nautical astronomy, and is ushered in by a number of ceremonies, some of which never fail to excite the ridicule of our 'shore-going' friends who may happen to be on board; and, who from not well understanding the drift of what they see, are apt to fancy much of it unnecessary. Nothing is so easy, indeed, as to quiz those punctilious formalities with which naval discipline abounds. But if experience have taught that many of the most valuable fruits of good order can be traced to the exact observance of these very forms, they surely lose none of their importance from having been so long established that their origin is forgotten, still less from being laughed at by persons not having had the happiness of being brought up at sea, and therefore by no means the best judges of the utility of these refinements.

But, after all, we sailors really ought to be more indulgent to our friends, who smile at these apparent trifles; for we know only by experience, that it requires a long acquaintance with such things to understand their useful bearing on more important matters. It will often happen, for instance, that some part of a particular ceremony may be observed every day for many consecutive months or years, during all which interval it might perhaps have been entirely omitted, without any obvious detriment to the general course of discipline; and yet, at the end of the period, serious evils might possibly arise from its being accidentally or wilfully neglected. Unforeseen circumstances often occur so suddenly, that there is no time to make provision for the exigency; and it is then the forms alluded to become of the utmost consequence in preserving order, chiefly by pointing out clearly to every one concerned what is usually done.

Ingenious but narrow-sighted men, sufficiently gifted too with talents and knowledge, sometimes take great delight in holding up to ridicule many apparently absurd, or what they are pleased to call useless, forms, in the Church, the House of Commons, the Court of Chancery, and in other long-established institutions. Their field of view seems too limited to embrace all the parts of the subject at once, and they forget how presumptuous it is to place their own insulated opinion, and com-

paratively brief course of observation, in opposition to the experience of centuries, during which a boundless variety of circumstances must necessarily have brought these rules into play again and again. The fair *primâ facie* inference, respecting anything which has stood the wear and tear of many years, surely is, that as it has been often tried and not found wanting, it is indiscreet to condemn it, merely because its value, at any given moment, may not happen to be quite obvious to a person professedly hunting for faults.

Almost all the forms and ceremonies alluded to, which constitute integral parts of the system on board ship, though, to inexperienced eyes, some of them may seem trivial and even cumbersome, and often ridiculous, have doubtless been found, in the long-run, the most suitable, not only to the average current of probable circumstances in the course of daily practice, but likewise the best adapted to meet those uncommon incidents which, however rare, may occur, and must therefore be guarded against.

I remember once seeing a line-of-battle ship very nearly lost on a shoal, from one of the links of this chain of formal observances being accidentally dropped. There was an Admiral on board, and when that is the case, he of course takes command of the deck if he pleases, though it is not usual for him to do so. We were beating through the Straits of Malacca one morning, when the Admiral, who was anxious about the passage, came out of his cabin and gave various orders respecting the course, the quantity and trim of the sails, and so on. These directions were repeated to the officer of the watch by the captain, who always comes on deck the moment the Admiral appears. The lieutenant had thus two persons over him commanding the evolutions of the ship, and, of course, his responsibility was diminished in proportion. Presently the Admiral stepped into his cabin ; and the captain, forgetting to go through the ceremony of re-investing the officer of the watch with the charge of the deck, went quietly below. In strictness, it is not necessary that the captain should go through any such ceremony, but it is usual to do so, especially in so ticklish a navigation. At all events, for a minute or two, the officer who was on the fore part of the deck did not perceive that he was left alone. The ship, in the mean while, was standing towards the shore, and, as the lieutenant naturally thought, still under the joint guidance of the Admiral and captain, who, by their interference, for the previous half-hour, had almost entirely taken the charge off his shoulders. The water shoaled so rapidly, that in two minutes the Minden would have been on shore, had not the poop midshipman detected the danger, and called out to the officer that the Admiral had gone into his cabin, and the captain below. The helm was instantly put down ; but so close was the shoal, that, as the ship came round, the heel of her rudder grazed the edge of the bank, stirring up the mud in a whirlpool of ten yards across.

The moment of apparent noon, or what the astronomers term the sun's culmination, the instant, in short, when his centre passes the meridian of the ship, is called twelve o'clock. This, which is named Apparent Time, being exactly that shown by a sun-dial, is never the same as the correct Mean Time of a clock, except near the equinoxes and solstices. These periods are about the middle of April and June, the beginning of September and the end of December. Owing, however, to the constant change of the ship's position in longitude, far greater errors in time are produced than these, which are accounted for by the inequality of the sun's motion. As it is impossible, therefore, to have any fixed time with us regulated by a clock, as on shore, we are forced to adopt the best determinate starting-point we can find. This is the moment when the sun is observed by a sextant to be at his greatest altitude above the horizon.

I need not mention, that as there are 360 degrees in the circuit of the globe, which revolves once in 24 hours, each degree of longitude must take four minutes to pass. Now, in those high latitudes, where a degree of longitude, owing to the convergence of the meridians as they approach the poles, becomes only 30 or 40 miles in length, it will often happen to cruising ships that Monday may be half-an-hour longer than Sunday, and Tuesday, on the contrary, half-an-hour shorter. To make this plain, let us suppose the ship to have remained during Sunday on the same meridian ; say she is in longitude 40° W., and in latitude 60° N. Her day will have lasted in this case exactly 24 hours, as if she had been in harbour. But if, at the beginning of the next day (Monday), she happens to start a chase in the western horizon, and during the pursuit runs due west, at the rate of about nine miles and a half an hour, she will make 225 miles westing in the course of the day. In the latitude of 60°, a degree of longitude contains only 30 miles ; and as each degree is equal to four minutes, 225 miles, or seven degrees and a half, make 30 minutes difference of time, and the ship will now be in longitude 47½ W. In other and more popular words, as she will have run away from the sun seven degrees and a half of longitude, it will cost the sun thirty minutes' time to come up to the new meridian reached by the ship, further to the westward than the day before. The length of Monday (counting from noon on Sunday to noon on Monday) will therefore consist of 24 hours and a half.

Again, if it shall happen just at twelve o'clock on Monday, when the sun is on the meridian of the ship, that a strange sail heaves in sight due East, and the ship starts off back again to the meridian of 40° W. at the same rate, it is clear she will now meet the sun, and thus anticipate the noon, by a portion of time nearly equal to that by which she had retarded that epoch on the previous day, by getting ahead of him. Her day counted from one noon to the other, will now, of course, be only 23 hours and a half long. Thus, there will be one whole hour's difference between the length of Monday and Tuesday.

If this experiment be pushed to the utmost, and the entire circuit of the globe made out, it is obvious that in going round the world to the westward, a complete day will be lost in the reckoning of time, and in sailing to the eastward a day will be gained. A ship, it is true, takes considerably longer than the sun to make this circuit, but the accumulated effect is the same. Although no one can doubt that in theory this must be so, the practical evidence of its truth generally strikes the

imagination almost as much as if it were unexpected. At least, I remember being a good deal interested by finding the Spaniards at Manilla, in the Philippine Islands, calling that Sunday which we called Monday.

Manilla lies in the China Sea, nearly in 120° East longitude; and as we had reached it by sailing round the Cape of Good Hope, we met the sun each day somewhat sooner than if we had remained stationary since noon of the day before. Consequently, it was eight o'clock on Monday evening, by true solar time at Manilla, when our chronometers, set to Greenwich time, indicated noon in England.

But the Spaniards, who first went to Manilla, had followed the opposite course, sailing to the westward round Cape Horn, and thence across the Pacific Ocean. By following this course they lost a certain portion of time daily, until, on reaching Manilla, they were no fewer than sixteen hours behind-hand of European time, instead of being eight hours ahead, as we were who came round the Cape of Good Hope. When these Spanish* voyagers, in crossing the Pacific, reached the meridian of 180°, they had lost just twelve hours; or, which means the same thing, when it was only midnight of Sunday by their reckoning, it was noon of Monday by their watches showing Cadiz time. Had the present usage been followed in those early days (three centuries ago and upwards), the name of their day would have been changed from Sunday to Monday in their log-book, the moment the meridian of 180° was passed, and they had come into east longitude. With the termination of west longitude, which ends at the 180th degree, the reckoning of time, proper to the hemisphere which includes America, ought to have terminated likewise; but the Spaniards not reflecting upon this, carried on the days they brought from Europe. So that, when they fell in with their countrymen in the Indian seas, who, from having sailed round the Cape of Good Hope from west to east, had met, instead of receded from the sun, the voyagers necessarily differed by one whole day. To repeat this in other words, the party which sailed westward by Cape Horn were 16 hours slow of Cadiz, and those who had gone east by the Cape of Good Hope were 8 hours fast of the same place. By these joint differences, 24 hours were made up just as completely as if the whole circuit of the globe had been traversed.

To render all this still clearer, let it be supposed, at a given moment, that the sun is on the meridian of London. The time there is called noon; we shall suppose it to be noon of Monday. Then, at the same instant of absolute time, those voyagers at Manilla, who went to the eastward by the Cape of Good Hope, will call that moment 8 o'clock on Monday evening; while the others, who sailed to the westward by Cape Horn, might call it 8 o'clock on Sunday evening. One set being 8 hours ahead of London time, the other 16 hours behind it.

The missionaries who first visited the Friendly Islands sailed by the Cape of Good Hope, and, like the Spaniards, omitted to change their style on passing the 180th degree of longitude. Consequently, when they reached Otaheite (in 150° W.), they called that Sunday which in strictness was Saturday, and this erroneous reckoning still exists*.

* See Captain Beechey's very interesting Voyage, p. 199.

The remedy for these mistakes is simple. When a ship coming from the west passes the 180th degree of longitude, she changes the name of her day in the logbook from Monday to Sunday, to suit the style of west longitude. A ship coming from the eastward, changes from Sunday to Monday.

From this circumstance, a case of apparent difficulty often arises in the Navy. If a ship sails completely round the world by going towards the eastward, she will, by meeting the sun, have 366 noons in the course of one year; and as Jack expects, and is entitled, by law, to a bellyful every day at that hour, who is to suffer, he or the purser! The crew, it is obvious, must have their regular meals; but it would be hard that the purser should be a loser, merely because the world happens not to stand still.

On the other hand, if a ship sails to the westward, and makes the entire circuit of the globe, the very self-same interval of one year will have elapsed, while the Johnnies will have had only 364 dinners served out to them, though by the regulations of the service they are entitled to 365. How is this to be settled?

As I was myself a little puzzled to answer my own question, I thought it prudent to write to a friend in the Navy Office, to procure correct information. The following is the reply I received:—

"The answer from the Victualling Office is, that the 366 days' victualling are allowed in the voyage which gives that number of noons; but, upon the contrary voyage, the purser is not cut down to 364 meals, because the men, knowing that he can claim 365 days' victualling for the interval, demand the odd day from him, under the head of 'Savings,' which is accordingly allowed; so that John Bull suffers, as usual."

I shall only add to the luminous statement of my official correspondent, that I am very sure, of all the sufferings to which John Bull is said to be exposed, this is perhaps the one which that worthy old gentleman is likely to grudge the least. I may perhaps have failed to make it clear to his sober understanding how there can possibly be a year with 366 days in it; but if he is good enough to admit the fact, on my professional assurance, I think he will likewise see the reasonableness of giving his sailors at least one dinner for every day in the year.

Noon, therefore, which is the ship's company's dining hour, forms an important era in the day of every man-of-war, and is ushered in with suitable respect. At seven bells in the forenoon, or half-past eleven, as it is called on shore, the mate of the watch goes down to the master, and tells him what o'clock it is; upon which that officer, while he is getting his sextant ready, and looking at his own watch, to see how it agrees with the chronometer, asks the midshipman if the day be clear or thick, how the ship's head is, and what chance there is of his seeing the sun. These are merely questions of curiosity; for whether it be a fine day or not, or whether there be any chance, or none at all, of seeing the sun, it is the same thing, or ought to be the same thing to him. By a rude inspection of the log-board, the experienced eye of the master infers how much easting or westing the ship has made since noon of the day before, and, accordingly, he

is prepared either to find the sun before or after the ship's time; that is, he judges whether to expect the moment of noon sooner or later than the watches show.

So irregular, indeed, is the return of this period of our noon afloat, that it is the custom, in most ships, not to turn the half-hour glass at 7 bells (¼-past 11), because the interval between ½-past 11 and noon is seldom thirty minutes long, being sometimes fifteen, and sometimes forty-five minutes in duration. If, therefore, the sentry at the cabin-door, who has charge of the glass, were to turn it at seven bells, and it were to be made noon when the sand had only half run out, what would he do?

How long this primitive device for measuring time by a sand-glass has continued, or will be allowed to continue, on board ships of war, I do not know: but certainly nothing can be more completely out of character with every other part of the equipment on board, or more unworthy of the present state of nautical science.

Be that as it may, the master follows the mate of the watch to the quarter-deck; and if the sun be shining out distinctly, he glances his eye to one or the other gangway, from which it can generally be seen. If the ship's course be exactly south or exactly north, it is obvious that, to get the sun's altitude at noon, the observer must place himself either forward, over the bows, or abaft on the taffrail; but, in all other cases, or nearly all, the meridian altitude can be taken from the gangway. Most ships have a very convenient little recess at the after end of the waist hammock-netting, just over the gangway-steps, bounded, as the geography books would say, on the after-side by the end of the quarter-deck bulwark, and on the foremost part by a board against which the hammocks rest. This snug corner, which is about three feet square, affords the officer of the watch the means of looking nearly right ahead or right astern. From this station he can also cast his eye along the whole length of the ship's side, to see if any ropes be trailing overboard, or the still greater abomination of a net full of potatoes, or a piece of salt beef or pork, slily tied to a string, be towed alongside—a practice the men adopt whenever they can, their object being to wash out some portion of the brine from the meat before dressing it.

If the captain be one of the star-gazers of the ship, that is, if he takes any personal interest in or charge of the navigation of the vessel under his command, he, of course, occupies this favourite spot, or observatory, in the gangway. Should any bold youth, therefore, have got there before him, the intruder leaps out of it in a great hurry, the instant the glitter of the captain's sextant is seen at the top of the ladder. I should have mentioned before, that every mid who has an instrument, whether it be a wooden quadrant, or a brass sextant, is required to muster on deck at seven bells, to look out for the sun. Of course, this is the grand period for comparison of notes; and much cheerful discussion goes on as to the merits of the different observers and instruments, methods of calculation, and all the crude slang of incipient information, in which half-informed folks delight to exhibit their knowledge, quite sure they know everything.

In fine weather, accordingly, this is perhaps one of the pleasantest half-hours in the day. The good-humour extends itself all over the ship; and mid-day being the dinner-time of the sailors, some of the most important steps preparatory to that ceremony are taken in this interval. The ship's cook, with his one arm (for he has seldom more; or if he have two arms, he has certainly only one leg), empties the coppers, by means of a monstrous fork, called his Tormentors, of the beef or pork which has been in preparation during the fore-noon. He likewise allows the pease-soup to run off by a cock from another boiler into a huge tub, ready to receive it.

The number of men in a mess varies from eight to twelve in a frigate, each mess having a separate table; every man is cook in rotation, for one day only. It is customary to allow the people to change their messes monthly, giving timely intimation to the mate of the lower-deck, and to the purser's steward, at the end of the month, to arrange his mess-book; no other sanction or form being necessary. In a line-of-battle ship the tables are larger, and two messes sit at the same table, one on each side. The average number in the mess is the same as in a frigate, and they are under the same regulations. A petty officer or leading man, who is styled captain of the mess, is at the head of each; and in a well-disciplined ship, he is in some manner responsible for the good conduct and cleanliness of the others. He also signs for short-allowance money, savings, and so on.

The captain, first lieutenant, and mate of the lower-deck, correct their mess-books every month from that of the purser's steward, to enable them to estimate the characters of the men who mess together, and in order to assist in referring to his associates, when the conduct of any one is called in question.

As the hour of noon approaches, the cooks of the messes may be seen coming up the fore and main hatchways, with their mess-kids in their hands, the hoops of which are kept as bright as silver, and the wood work as neat and as clean as the pail of the most tidy dairy-maid. The grog, also, is now mixed in a large tub, under the half-deck, by the quarter-masters of the watch-below, assisted by other leading and responsible men among the ship's company, closely superintended, of course, by the mate of the hold, to see that no liquor is abstracted, and also by the purser's steward, who regulates the exact quantity of spirits and of water to be measured out. The seamen whose next turn it is to take the wheel, or heave the lead, or who have to mount the mast-head to look out, as well as the marines who are to be planted as sentries at noon, are allowed to take both their dinner and their grog beforehand. These persons are called 'seven-bell men,' from the hour at which they have their allowance served to them.

Long before twelve o'clock all these and various other minor preparations have been so completely made, that there is generally a remarkable stillness over the whole ship just before the important moment of noon arrives. The boatswain stands near the break of the forecastle, with his bright silver call, or whistle, in his hand, which ever and anon he places just at the tip of his lips to blow out any crumbs which threaten to interfere with its melody, or to give a faint 'too-weet! too-weet!'

as a preparatory note, to fix the attention of the boatswain's mates, who being, like their chief, provided with calls, station themselves at intervals along the main-deck, ready to give due accompaniment to their leader's tune.

The boatswain keeps his eye on the group of observers, and well knows when the 'sun is up' by the stir which takes place amongst the astronomers, or by noticing the master working out his latitude with a pencil on the ebony bar of his quadrant, or on the edge of the hammock-railing; though, if he be one of your modern, neat-handed navigators, he carries his little book for this purpose. In one way or other the latitude is computed as soon as the master is satisfied the sun has reached his highest altitude in the heavens. He then walks aft to the officer of the watch, and reports 12 o'clock, communicating also the degrees and minutes of the latitude observed. The lieutenant proceeds to the captain, wherever he may be, and repeats that it is 12, and that so-and-so is the latitude. The same formal round of reports is gone through, even if the captain be on deck, and has heard every word spoken by the master, or even if he have himself assisted in making the observation.

The captain now says to the officer of the watch, "Make it 12!"

The officer calls out to the mate of the watch, "Make it 12!"

The mate, ready primed, sings out to the quarter-master, "Strike 8 bells!"

And lastly, the hard-a-weather old quarter-master, stepping down the ladder, grunts out to the sentry at the cabin-door, "Turn the glass, and strike the bell!"

By this time the boatswain's call has been in his mouth for several minutes, his elbow in the air, and his little finger on the stop, ready to send forth the glad tidings of a hearty meal. Not less ready or less eager are the groups of listeners seated at their snow-white deal tables below, or the crowd surrounding the coppers, with their mess-kids acting the part of drums to their impatient knuckles. At the first stroke of the bell, which, at this particular hour, is always sounded with peculiar vivacity, the officer of the watch exclaims to the boatswain, "Pipe to dinner!"

These words, followed by a glorious burst of shrill sounds, 'long drawn out,' are hailed with a murmur of delight by many a hungry tar and many a jolly marine. The merry notes are nearly drowned next instant in the rattle of tubs and kettles, the voice of the ship's cook and his mates bawling out the numbers of the messes, as well as by the sound of feet tramping along the decks and down the ladders, with the steaming, ample store of provisions; such as set up and brace the seaman's frame, and give it vigour for any amount of physical action.

Then comes the joyous grog! that nautical nectar, so dear to the lips of every true-hearted sailor, with which he washes down His Majesty's junk, as he roughly but good-humouredly styles the government allowance of beef; and while he quaffs off his portion, or his whack, as he calls it, he envies no man alive, and laughs to scorn those party philanthropists who describe his life as one of unhappy servitude. The real truth is, there are no set of men in the world, in their condition of life, I believe I might say in any class of life, who are better taken care of than the sailors and marines of the Navy, or who, upon the whole, are more happy than they. I shall certainly make a point, some day or other, of explaining not only how all this has been brought about, but how it is kept up, and likewise how the system may be perpetuated, in spite of the many attempts made at home to persuade the seamen that if they are not discontented they ought to be so.

In the mean time, a few words may not be uninteresting on the daily allowance of provisions to the marines and seamen of His Majesty's service. I have often, indeed, observed a considerable degree of curiosity expressed on this score, and shall therefore transcribe, without abridgment, the regulations recently established.

It is right to preface these details with one explanatory remark. Up to the date of the following order (1824) every man on board was allowed, each day, no less a quantity than half-a-pint of ardent spirits, mixed with three half-pints of water; but, even when thus diluted, the allowance formed a quart of extremely strong drink. It was divided into two portions, one half being served out soon after noon, the other between four and five o'clock. This quantity was undoubtedly a great deal more than the average strength of men's heads could bear; and, in the opinion of the most observant officers in the Navy, a large proportion of all the punishments were consequent upon offences caused by the inebriating effects of that very allowance with which the men had been supplied by Government. The captain was not authorised to diminish the allowance, while among the men it would have been a reproach in any one not to have drank the whole, whatever his taste or discretion suggested. In hot climates especially, I really do not think it an exaggeration to say, that one-third of every ship's company were more or less intoxicated, or at least muddled and half stupified, every evening. The effect of such a system on the health of the crews of His Majesty's ships must have been very serious, while to good discipline it was most hurtful.

It was at length determined by Government to reduce the allowance of spirits one-half; and now only one quarter of a pint is served out daily. Captain Sir John Phillimore is, I believe, entitled to the praise of having first induced his ship's company to try the good effects of drinking only one half of their usual portion of grog. This experiment was made a year or two antecedent to these regulations, and in all probability its great success suggested the general adoption of this mirable measure.

I believe I am justified in saying that the alteration has been attended by the most valuable effects; and that, so far from its being unpopular amongst the seamen, they are perfectly sensible of the salutary nature of the change. I have not myself been afloat since; but I learn, from good authority, that the effect has greatly exceeded the expectation of the warmest advisers of the plan.

On diminishing the allowance of grog, however, the Admiralty acted, not only with an exactness of good faith which was felt and acknowledged by all the fleet, but with a degree of considerate liberality, which, though it may perhaps appear a trifle in the eyes of persons to whom sailors' habits

are not familiar, has gone a long way to increase their comforts, and to add to the popularity of the service. I allude to the compensation given to the men, in lieu of the spirits taken away from their allowance. Not only is a pecuniary equivalent given them, in the shape of an addition to their monthly pay, but they have now allowed them, over and above what they had before, a quantity of tea, coffee, or cocoa (as the case may be), sufficient to make a full pint of liquid every evening.

To those who are acquainted with the peculiar cooking and slopping sort of habits in which seamen take so much delight, I need not mention how great a boon this additional meal has proved to them. Indeed, so fond are they of such messes, that, although in old times their whole allowance of cocoa was not a drop too much for breakfast, they generally managed to put by a portion of it for what they call their supper. This mess consists of a biscuit broken into small bits, and boiled in a tin pot along with the cocoa.

A curious circumstance, I am told, has been the result of this change. In former times, it very seldom happened that the men drew their entire allowance of bread, viz., one pound a day; and the purser, consequently, had always 'some savings' to pay them on this account. Now, however, it rarely happens, I understand, that any bread is 'left behind;' clearly showing, that the sailors have acquired better appetites as they have learned to drink less grog.

The whole tenor of these regulations, as well as their minutest details, show the most thorough knowledge of the character of the men in whose favour they were established. For instance, it will be observed, by an inspection of the orders, that spirits are served out, as in all times past, only when wine or beer is not within reach; and consequently, the men would have no right, in strictness, to claim additional pay, or an additional meal, at such periods. But these admirable regulations, riding over such petty exceptions, made both the compensation and the new allowance permanent, although the diminution was only occasional. That is to say, when, instead of grog, the undiminished allowance of wine or beer is served out, the new meal and the addition to their pay are, nevertheless, still continued.

It is by such means that the hearty good-will of a ship's crew is at all times, and under all circumstances, most effectually won and preserved. Nor do I believe there is any set of men alive who have a quicker or juster perception of the value of such gentlemanlike treatment than sailors have; and this, by the way, is one of the best arguments in favour of correct and decorous language and conduct on the part of officers who wish to maintain their authority in full force.

Some persons, indeed, without due consideration, as I conceive, are apt to distrust the gratitude of sailors, and often to scoff at the notion of their having any just feeling for such minute attentions. But I am convinced that it is we ourselves, the officers, who are generally to blame for the unreasonable expectations we form as to the effects of our treatment upon the men. On calmly looking back to every incident of my naval life, I can say with truth, that I find it difficult to recall a single instance in which I have known a sailor prove himself ungrateful, or whose services, if properly managed, might not have been depended upon to the last.

By his nature and habits, Jack is a creature so essentially docile, that his merits and faults depend very much upon the discretion and talents of his officer. And I would most earnestly urge upon my young naval friends the primary importance of this truth. Their professional conduct, in fact, must always have a double effect, first on themselves, and secondly, on those under them. A generous-minded and truly patriotic officer will therefore never cease to recollect, that his crew may fairly be considered in the light of his own children, whose happiness or misery, whose errors or whose virtues, are always more or less under his control.

I have used, in the above account of ship matters, the word seaman or sailor in speaking of the crew; but it is right to explain, that in employing this term in its general sense, I mean to include the royal marine, who, though in some respects a very different being from the sailor, has very nearly the same feelings and objects. The interests of this invaluable body of men have, accordingly, been attended to, with the same good sense and generous consideration, as those of the blue jackets.

The orders now in force on this subject in the Navy are as follow:

VICTUALLING REGULATIONS.

"Admiralty Office, July 1, 1824.

"The King having been pleased, by his order in council of the 23d June, to establish a new and improved scale for victualling His Majesty's Navy, a copy thereof is subjoined.

"There shall be allowed to every person serving in His Majesty's ships, the following daily quantities of provisions, viz.

Bread	One pound.
Beer	One gallon.
Cocoa	One ounce.
Sugar	One and a half ounce.
Fresh meat . . .	One pound.
Vegetables . . .	Half pound.
Tea	Quarter of an ounce.

"When fresh meat and vegetables are not issued, there shall be allowed in lieu thereof—

Salt beef	¾ lb.	Alternately.
and		
Flour	¾ lb.	
Salt pork	¾ lb.	
and		
Pease	½ pint	

"And weekly, whether fresh or salt meat is issued, oatmeal, half pint; vinegar, half pint.

"On the days on which the flour is ordered to be issued, suet and raisins, or currants, may be substituted for a portion of flour, at the following rate:—

One pound of raisins .	being considered equal to one pound of flour.
Half pound of currants	ditto ditto.
Half pound of suet . .	

"In case it should be found necessary to alter any of the above species of provisions, and to issue others as their substitutes, it is to be observed that

1¼ lb. of soft bread, or 1 lb. of rice, or . . . 1 lb. of flour	is to be considered equal to 1 lb. of biscuit.
1 pint of wine, or . . ½ pint of spirits . .	is to be considered equal to a gallon of beer.
1 oz. of coffee, or . . ½ oz. of tea	is to be considered equal to 1 oz. of cocoa.
1 lb. of rice, or . . . 1 pint of calavances, or 1 pint of dholl . . .	is to be considered equal to 1 pint of pease.
1 lb. of butter . . .	is to be considered equal to 1 lb. of sugar.
2 lbs. of cheese . . .	are to be considered equal to 1 lb. of cocoa.

½ lb. of onions, or of leeks, is to be considered equal to 1 lb. of other vegetables.

"Flag-officers, captains, and other commanding officers, will observe in the above scale, and will fully explain to the ships' companies under their orders, the advantages of this new system, viz. that what were called banyan days are abolished; that meat, with vegetables, flour, or pease, is to be issued every day; that flour, instead of being exchanged for a portion of beef, will now become an article of the men's regular allowance; and that a quantity of tea or coffee, sufficient to make a pint of liquid, will be issued every evening.

"It will be observed in the table of substitutes, that the quantity of spirits to be issued in lieu of beer or wine is diminished one half; but, in addition to the pint of tea or coffee allowed in part compensation for this diminution of spirits, His Majesty has been graciously pleased, in further and full compensation, to add two shillings per month to the pay of such warrant officers as do not rank with lieutenants, and of each petty and non-commissioned officer, seaman, marine, and boy. As the diminution of spirits only takes place when beer and wine are not issued, while the addition of tea or coffee and the increased pay are permanent, it will be obvious how much this regulation is to the pecuniary advantage and comfort of the ships' companies; while it is confidently expected that the diminution in the article of spirits will conduce to the health of the people, and the good order and discipline of the ships.

"In addition to these advantages, it is intended that a certain portion of the pay which may be due to each warrant and petty officer (not allowed to draw bills), and to each non-commissioned officer, seaman, marine, and boy, who may be desirous of receiving it, shall be issued to them when in any port abroad or at home, at the expiration of every one, two, or three months, as the captain may judge expedient, by way of pocket-money, viz. four shillings per month to warrant, petty, and non-commissioned officers, seamen, and marines, and two shillings to each boy: but as the carrying this arrangement into full effect will require the sanction of the legislature, it is intended to submit a bill to parliament, early in the next session, to authorise it; and in the mean while, in order to carry the same principle into effect as far as is at present practicable, the additional two shillings, now added to the pay as compensation for part of the spirits, will be paid to the before-mentioned classes in the same way that short-allowance money is now paid.

"The Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, in communicating to the Fleet the gracious and beneficent intentions of the King, are satisfied that they will be received by the officers and men as additional marks of His Majesty's favour, and as real and substantial improvements to the condition of the petty and non-commissioned officers and men.

"By command of their Lordships,
"J. W. CROKER."

Lemon-juice, our grand antiscorbutic, is not issued except to the ships going on foreign stations, nor until fourteen days have elapsed after the issue of beer, fresh meat, fruit or vegetables, has ceased; unless under some extraordinary circumstances, the surgeon thinks it necessary for the health of the crew.

There is no fixed regulation as to the manner in which it is to be used; it may be either mixed with the grog or made into lemonade. The allowance is half-an-ounce of lemon-juice, and half-an-ounce of sugar per day, to each man. Some officers prefer serving out double allowance for one week, and then missing a week; the pint of lemonade is thus made doubly strong, and, of course, more agreeable to the palate. It is sometimes mixed with the grog, which is converted into punch by this process; but this is not relished by the sailors. Occasionally, it is served out in a raw state, and in this case the men use it either as a condiment for their dough or pudding, or mix it with their drinking water. It is generally appreciated in any way, and seems to be equally beneficial in all, as far as the health of the crew is concerned.

It may not be out of place, perhaps, to mention here, that the only perfectly free privilege which the interfering nature of our sea-discipline allows to the sailors, is their choice of mess-mates, already alluded to; at least I am not at present aware, that, from the rising of the sun to his setting, or from his setting to rising again, there is any part of a man-of-war's man's life which is not more or less subjected to regulations over which he himself has no control.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

ROCKALL.

EVERY good officer makes it a point of conscience, as far as he possibly can, not to order any evolution, or otherwise to interfere with the people at their meals, especially at dinner. This habitual and official consideration grows so completely into a habit that it follows most naval men on shore, who can never bear that their servants should be interrupted at meals, without the most urgent necessity. This, like every other good thing, may be caricatured; but the principle is not only sound in itself, as a matter of feeling and propriety, but the practice is one which, in the long-run, will always prove the most beneficial to the master, whether afloat or on shore. Hearty service, or that which springs from a wish to oblige, is not to be purchased by any thing but kindness. And people ought sometimes to recollect, that punctuality and consideration are reciprocal qualities; and that no amount of reward or punishment will procure really good service, if the master himself fails in his part of the obligation, and is not, in his own person, punctual and considerate.

On the 13th of October, 1811, we were cruising in the Endymion off the north of Ireland, in a fine clear day, succeeding one in which it had blown almost a hurricane. The master had just taken his meridian observation, the officer of the watch had reported the latitude, the captain had ordered it to be made twelve o'clock, and the boatswain, catching a word from the lieutenant, was in the full swing of his "Pipe to dinner!" when the captain called out,

"Stop! stop! I meant to go about first."

"Pipe belay! Mr. King," smartly ejaculated the officer of the watch, addressing the boatswain. Which words being heard over the decks, caused a sudden cessation of the sounds peculiar to that hungry season. The cook stood with a huge six-pound piece of pork uplifted, on his tormentors; his mate ceased to bale out the pease-soup; and the whole ship seemed paralysed. The boatswain, having checked himself in the middle of his long-winded dinner-tune, drew a fresh inspiration, and dashed off into the opposite sharp, abrupt, cutting sound of the "Pipe belay!"—the essence of which peculiar note is that its sounds should be understood and acted upon with the utmost degree of promptitude.

There was now a dead pause of perfect silence all over the ship, in expectation of what was to come next. All eyes were turned to the chief.

"No! never mind, we'll wait," said the good-natured captain, unwilling to interfere with the comforts of the men: "let them go to dinner; we shall tack at one o'clock, it will do just as well."

The boatswain, on a nod from the lieutenant of the watch, at once recommenced his merry 'Pipe to dinner' notes; upon which a loud, joyous laugh rang from one end of the ship to the other. This hearty burst was not in the slightest degree disrespectful; on the contrary, it sounded like a grateful expression of glee at the prospect of the approaching good things which, by this time, were finding their speedy course down the hatchways.

Nothing was now heard but the cheerful chuckle of well-fed company, the clatter of plates and knives, and the chit-chat of light hearts, under the influence of temperate excitement.

When one o'clock came, the hands were called, "About ship!" But as the helm was in the very act of going down, the look-out man at the fore-topmast-head called out,

"I see something a little on the lee-bow, sir!"

"Something! What do you mean by something?" cried the first lieutenant, making at the same time a motion to the quarter-master at the conn to right the helm again.

"I don't know what it is, sir," cried the man; "it is black, however."

"Black! Is it like a whale?" asked the officer, playing a little with his duty.

"Yes, sir," cried the look-out man, unconscious that Shakspeare had been before him, "very like a whale!"

The captain and the officer exchanged glances at the poor fellow aloft having fallen into the trap laid for him; and the temptation must have been great to have inquired whether it were not 'like a weasel;' but this might have been stretching the jest too far; so the lieutenant merely called to the signal midshipman, and desired him to skull up to the mast-head with his glass, to see what he made of the look-out man's whale.

"It looks like a small rock," cried young sky-lark, as soon as he reached the top-gallant yard, and had taken the glass from his shoulders, across which he had slung it with a three-yarn fox.

"Stuff and nonsense," replied the officer, "there are no rocks hereabouts; we can but just see the top of Muckish behind Tory Island. Take another spy at your object, youngster. The mast-head man and you will make it out to be something, by-and-by, between you, I dare say."

"It's a boat, sir!" roared out the boy. "It's a boat adrift, two or three points on the lee-bow."

"Oh ho!" said the officer, "that may be, sir?" turning, with an interrogative air, to the captain, who gave orders to keep the frigate away a little, that this strange-looking affair might be investigated. Meanwhile, as the ship was not to be tacked, the watch was called, and one half only of the people remained on deck. The rest strolled sleepily below; or disposed themselves in the sun on the lee gangway, mending their clothes or telling long yarns.

A couple of fathoms of the fore and main-sheets, and a slight touch of the weather top-sail and top-gallant braces, with a check of the bow-lines, made the swift-footed Endymion spring forward, like a greyhound slipped from the leash. In a short time we made out that the object we were in chase of was, in fact, a boat. On approaching a little nearer, some heads of people became visible, and then several figures stood up waving their hats to us. We brought to, just to windward of them, and sent a boat to see what was the matter.

It turned out as we supposed; they had belonged to a ship which had foundered in the recent gale. Although their vessel had become water-logged, they had contrived to hoist their long-boat out, and to stow in her twenty-one persons, some of them seamen and some passengers. Of these, two were women, and three children. Their vessel, it appeared, had sprung a leak in the middle of the gale, and in spite of all their pumping, the water gained so fast upon them, that they took to baling as a more effectual method. After a time, when this resource failed, the men, totally worn out, and quite dispirited, gave it up as a bad job, abandoned their pumps, and actually lay down to sleep. In the morning the gale broke; but the ship had filled in the mean time, and was falling fast over on her broadside. With some difficulty they disentangled the long-boat from the wreck, and thought themselves fortunate in being able to catch hold of a couple of small oars, with a studding-sail boom for a mast, on which they hoisted a fragment of their main-hatchway tarpaulin for a sail. One ham, and three gallons of water, were all the provisions they were able to secure; and in this fashion they were set adrift on the wide sea. The master of the ship, with two gentlemen who were passengers, two sailors, and one woman, remained on board, preferring to stick by the vessel while there was any part of her above water. This, at least, was the story told us by the people we picked up.

The wind had been fair for the shore when the long-boat left the wreck, and though their ragged sail scarcely drove them along, their oars were only just sufficient to keep the boat's head the

right way. Of course, they made but small progress; so that when they rose on the top of the swell, which was still very long and high, in consequence of the gale, they could only just discover the distant land of Muckish, a remarkable flat-topped mountain, on the north-west coast of Ireland, not very far from the promontory called the Bloody Foreland.

There appeared to have been little discipline amongst this forlorn crew, even when the breeze was in their favour; but when the wind chopped round, and blew off shore, they gave themselves up to despair, laid in their oars, let the sail flap to pieces, gobbled up all their provisions, and drank out their whole stock of water. Meanwhile the boat, which had been partially stove in the confusion of clearing the ship, began to fill with water; and, as they all admitted afterwards, if it had not been for the courage and patience of the women under this sharp trial, they must have gone to the bottom. As it was both cold and rainy, the poor children, who were too young to understand the nature of their situation, or the inutility of complaining, incessantly cried out for water, and begged that more clothes might be wrapped round them. Even after they came to us, the little things were still crying, "Oh! do give me some water!" words which long sounded in our ears. None of these women were by any means strong; on the contrary, one of them seemed to be very delicate; yet they managed to rouse the men to a sense of their duty, by a mixture of reproaches and entreaties, combined with the example of that singular fortitude, which often gives more than masculine vigour to female minds in seasons of danger. How long this might have lasted, I cannot say; but probably the strength of the men, however stimulated, must have given way before night, especially as the wind freshened, and the boat was drifting further to sea. Had it not been for the accident of the officer of the forenoon watch on board the Endymion being unaware of the captain's wish to tack before dinner, these poor people most probably would all have perished.

The women, dripping wet, and scarcely capable of moving hand or foot, were lifted up the side, in a state almost of stupor; for they were confused by the hurry of the scene, and their fortitude had given way the moment all high motive to exertion was over. One of them, on reaching the quarter-deck, slipped through our hands, and, falling on her knees, wept violently, as she returned thanks for such a wonderful deliverance. But her thoughts were bewildered; and, fancying that her child was lost, she struck her hands together, and, leaping again on her feet, screamed out, "Oh! where's my bairn! my wee bairn?"

At this instant, a huge quarter-master, whose real name or nickname (I forget which) was Billy Magnus, and who was reputed to have no fewer than five wives, and God knows how many children, appeared over the gangway hammocks, holding the missing urchin in his immense paw, where it squealed and twisted itself about, like Gulliver between the finger and thumb of the Brobdignag farmer. The mother had just strength enough left to snatch her offspring from Billy, when she sunk down flat on the deck, completely exhausted.

By means of a fine blazing fire, and plenty of hot tea, toast, and eggs, it was easy to remedy one class of these poor people's wants; but how to rig them out in dry clothes was the puzzle, till the captain bethought him of a resource which answered very well. He sent to several of the officers for their dressing gowns; and these, together with supplies from his own wardrobe, made capital gowns and petticoats, at least till the more fitting drapery of the ladies was dried. The children were tumbled into bed in the same apartment close to the fire; and it would have done any one's heart good to have witnessed the style in which the provisions vanished from the board, while the women wept, prayed, and laughed, by turns.

The rugged seamen, when taken out of the boat, showed none of these symptoms of emotion, but running instinctively to the scuttle-butt, asked eagerly for a drop of water. As the most expeditious method of feeding and dressing them, they were distributed amongst the different messes, one to each, as far as they went. Thus they were all soon provided with dry clothing, and with as much to eat as they could stow away; for the doctor, when consulted, said, they had not fasted so long as to make it dangerous to give them as much food as they were disposed to swallow. With the exception of the ham, devoured in the boat, and which, after all, was but a mouthful a-piece, they had tasted nothing for more than thirty hours; so that, I suppose, better justice was never done to His Majesty's beef, pork, bread, and other good things, with which our fellows insisted upon stuffing the new-comers, till they fairly cried out for mercy, and begged to be allowed a little sleep.

Possibly some of us were the more disposed to sympathise with the distress of these people when adrift in their open boat on the wide sea, from having ourselves, about a month before, been pretty much in the same predicament. It always adds, as every one knows, greatly to our consideration for the difficulties and dangers of others, to have recently felt some touch of similar distress in our own persons. This maxim, though it is familiar enough, makes so little impression upon our ordinary thoughts, that when circumstances occur to fix our attention closely upon it, we are apt to arrive as suddenly at the perception of its truth as if it were a new discovery.

Travelling, indeed, of every kind, but especially that variety of it which belongs to the naval profession, is so fertile in wholesome and home illustrations of this class of subjects, that if a man have an atom of thought, or a spark of right sentiment in him, let it lie ever so deep, the chances are, it will get stirred up, sooner or later, by the rough shaking and friction of his peregrinations.

The advantages of moving about are stated with much truth and force by one of the most accomplished and graceful of modern writers, Rogers, the poet—whom I have the great happiness to call my friend—and who remarks that,

"In travelling we multiply events, and innocently. We set out, as it were, on our adventures; and many are those that occur to us, morning, noon, and night. The day we come to a place we have long heard and read of, and in

Italy we do so continually, is an era in our lives; and from that moment the very name calls up a picture. How delightfully, too, does the knowledge flow in upon us, and how fast! Would he who sat in a corner of his library, poring over books and maps, learn more, or so much, in the time, as he who, with his eyes and his heart open, is receiving impressions all day long from the things themselves! How accurately do they arrange themselves in our memory—towns, rivers, mountains; and in what living colours do we recall the dresses, manners, and customs of the people! Our sight is the noblest of all our senses. 'It fills the mind with most ideas, converses with its objects at the greatest distance, and continues longest in action without being tired' Our sight is on the alert when we travel; and its exercise is then so delightful, that we forget the profit *in* the pleasure*."

So true, indeed, have I found all this, that on looking back, I can scarcely recollect a single day, during the many years I never ceased to wander over the earth's surface, which has not furnished, in greater or less store, some materials for agreeable or useful reflection. I have generally found the mass of objects for comparison with those seen elsewhere, go on increasing at each step, till, in process of time, hardly any novel scene could be viewed, without its instantly calling up, as if by magic, the images of many other places, all contributing to give not only fresh interest, but higher utility to what was present.

In a fine autumnal morning, just a week after we had sailed from Lough Swilly, to cruise off the north of Ireland, a sail was reported on the lee-beam. We bore up instantly; but no one could make out what the chase was, nor which way she was standing; at least, no two of the knowing ones could be found to agree upon these matters. The various opinions, however, presently settled into one, or nearly so; for there were still some of the high-spyers who had the honesty to confess they were puzzled. The general opinion was, that it must be a brig with very white sails aloft, while those below were quite dark, as if the royals were made of cotton, and the courses of tarpaulin; a strange anomaly in seamanship, it is true, but still the best theory we could form to explain the appearances. A short time served to dispel these fancies; for we discovered, on running close to our mysterious vessel, that we had been actually chasing a rock; not a ship of oak and iron, but a solid block of granite, growing, as it were, out of the sea, at a greater distance from the mainland than, I believe, any other island, or islet, or rock, of the same diminutive size, is to be found in the world. This mere speck on the surface of the waters, for it seems to float on the sea, is only seventy feet high, and not more than a hundred yards in circumference. The smallest point of a pencil could scarcely give it a place on any map, which should not exaggerate its proportions to the rest of the islands in that stormy ocean. It lies at the distance of no fewer than 184 miles very nearly due west of St. Kilda, the remotest of the Hebrides, 290 from the nearest part of the main coast of Scotland, and 260 from the north of Ireland. Its name is Rockall, and it is well known to those Baltic traders that go north about. The stone of which this curious peak is composed is a dark-coloured granite; but, the top being covered with a coating as white as snow, from having been for ages the resting place of myriads of sea-fowl, it is constantly mistaken for a vessel under all sail. We were deceived by it several times during the same cruise, even after we had been put upon our guard, and knew its place well. I remember boarding three ships in one day, each of which, in reckoning the number of vessels in sight, counted Rockall as one, without detecting their mistake till I pointed their glasses to the spot.

As we had nothing better on our hands, it was resolved to make an exploring expedition to visit this little islet. Two boats were accordingly manned for the purpose; and while the ship stood down to leeward of it, the artists prepared their sketch-books, and the geologists their hammers, for a grand scientific field-day.

When we left the ship, the sea appeared so unusually smooth that we anticipated no difficulty in landing; but on reaching the spot we found a swell rising and falling many feet, which made it an exceedingly troublesome matter to accomplish our purpose. One side of the rock was perpendicular, and as smooth as a wall. The others, though steep and slippery, were sufficiently varied in their surface to admit of our crawling up when once out of the boat. But it required no small confidence in our footing, and a dash of that kind of faith which carries a hunter over a five-bar gate, to render the leap at all secure. A false step, or a faltering carriage, after the spring was resolved on, might have sent the explorer to investigate the secrets of the deep, in those fathomless regions where the roots of this mysterious rock connect it with the solid earth. In time, however, we all got up, hammers, sketch-books, and chronometers, inclusive.

At it was considered a point of some moment to determine not only the position, but the size of the rock, by actual observations made upon it, all hands were set busily to work, some to chip off specimens, others to measure the girth by means of a cord, while one of the boats was sent to make soundings in those directions where the bottom could be reached.

After we had been employed for some time in this manner, we observed a current sweeping past us at a considerable rate, and rather wondered that the ship, which was fast drifting away from us, did not fill and make a stretch so as to preserve her distance. But as the day was quite clear, we cared less about this addition to the pull, and went on with our operations. I forget exactly at what hour a slight trace of haze first came across the field of view. This soon thickened into a fog, which felt like a drizzle, and put some awkward apprehensions into our heads. It was immediately decided to get into the boats and return to the Endymion; for, by this time, we had finished all our real work, and were only amusing ourselves by scrambling about the rock.

The swell had silently increased in the interval to such a height, that the operation of returning to the boats was rendered twice as difficult as that of disembarking; and, what was a great deal

* Italy, a Poem by Samuel Rogers, Esq., 1830. p. 173. Perhaps the most tastefully got-up book of this or any other age.

worse, occupied twice as much time. It required the greater part of half-an-hour to tumble our whole party back again. This proceeding, difficult at any season I should suppose, was now reduced to a sort of summerset or flying leap ; for the adventurer, whose turn it was to spring, had to dash off the rock towards the boat, trusting more to the chance of being caught by his companions than to any skill of his own. Some of our Dutch-built gentry, known in the cockpit by the name of heavy-sterned Christians, came floundering amongst the thwarts and oars with such a crash, that we half expected they would make a clear breach through the boat's bottom.

As none of these minor accidents occurred, we pushed off, with our complement entire, towards the ship ; but, to our astonishment and dismay, no Endymion could now be seen. Some said, "only a minute ago she was there!" others asserted, as positively, that they had seen her in a totally different direction. In short, no two of us agreed as to where the frigate had last been seen, though all, unhappily, were of one mind as to the disagreeable fact of her being now invisible. She had evidently drifted off to a considerable distance; and, as the first thickening of the air had destroyed its transparency, we could see nothing in the slightest degree even like what is called the loom of a vessel. The horizon was visible, indistinctly indeed ; but it was certainly not the same horizon along which we had seen the ship sailing but half an hour before. The atmosphere had something of that troubled look which is given to a glass of water by dropping a little milk into it. So that, although there was no fog as yet, properly so called, there was quite enough of moisture to serve the unpleasant purpose of hiding the object of our search ; and we remained quite at a loss what to do. We rowed to a little distance from the rock, supposing it possible that some condensation of vapour, incident to the spot, might have cast a veil over our eyes. But nothing was to be seen all round.

It then occurred to some of our philosophers, that as dense air, by its very definition (as they gravely put it) is heavier than light air, it might so happen that the humid vapours had settled down upon the surface of the sea, and that, in fact, we were groping about in a shallow stratum of untransparent matter. The top of the rock, which was seventy feet higher, it was thought, might be in the clear region, and the ship's mast-heads, if not her hull, be visible from thence. There was a sort of pedantic plausibility about the technology of these young savans, which induced the commanding officer of the party, a bit of a dabbler himself in these scientific mysteries, to decide upon trying the experiment. At all events, he thought it might amuse and occupy the party. So one of the men was landed, the most alert of our number, who skipped up the rock like a goat.

All eyes were now turned to our look-out man, who no sooner reached the summit, than he was asked what he saw, with an impatience that betrayed more anxiety on the part of the officers than they probably wished should be perceived by the boats' crews.

"I can see nothing all round," cried the man, "except something out thereabouts," pointing with his hand.

"What does it look like?"

"I am afraid, sir, it is a fog-bank coming down upon us." And so it proved.

The experienced eye of the sailor, who in his youth had been a fisherman on the banks of Newfoundland, detected a strip or extended cloud, hanging along the verge of the horizon, like the first appearance of a low coast. This gradually swept down to leeward, and at length, enveloped rock, boats, and all, in a mantle of fog, so dense that we could not see ten yards in any direction.

Although our predicament may now be supposed as hopeless as need be, it was curious to observe the ebbs and flows in human thought as circumstances changed. Half-an-hour before, we had been provoked at our folly in not having left the rock sooner: but it was now a matter of rejoicing that we possessed such a fixed point to stick by, in place of throwing ourselves adrift altogether. We reckoned with certainty upon the frigate managing, sooner or later, to regain the rock ; and as that was the only mark at which she could aim, it was evidently the best for us to keep near.

We had been cruising for some time off the north of Ireland, during which we observed that these fogs occasionally lasted a couple of days, or even longer ; and, as we had not a drop of water in the boats, nor a morsel of provisions, the most unpleasant forebodings began to beset us. The wind was gradually rising, and the waves, when driven against the rock, were divided into two parts, which, after sweeping round the sides, met again to leeward, near the spot where we lay, and dashed themselves into such a bubble of a sea, that the boats were pitched about like bits of cork in a mill-leat. This motion was disagreeable enough, but our apprehension was that we should be dislodged altogether from our place of refuge ; while the gulls and sea-mews, as if in contempt of our helpless condition, or offended at our intrusion, wheeled about and screamed close to us, in notes most grating to our ears.

Since there was evidently nothing for it now but to remain fast, we chatted away as merrily as we could, each one trying to conceal his anxiety from his neighbour, some with considerable success, others without any. Several of the party overdid this matter, and talked so loud and so fast, that it was easy to see what was sitting at their hearts. One young gentleman received a check for this from his commanding officer, who said that he considered the case in the light of a piece of service, in which it became every person's duty to be as composed as if he were in the presence of an enemy.

What was curious enough, this brief though trying occasion, like the agency of fire on metals, brought out qualities unsuspected before. Some of the men, who had been held rather cheap on board in ordinary times, behaved so well during the few hours our present difficulties lasted, that they were looked upon ever afterwards with a totally different eye ; and several of them rose, from that day, to higher and higher ratings on the ship's books. On the other hand, one or two of the number, upon whose steadiness we should perhaps have reckoned with confidence in situations of danger or difficulty, gave way, and showed

an unexpected degree of nervous irritability under this protracted and uncertain detention.

Persons in command would do well to bear constantly in mind, that on such accidental occasions as this, they will often have opportunities of obtaining a correct knowledge of the merits as well as demerits of the people under them; and may learn how best to turn to account, at moments of need, the talents, fortitude, courage, or other qualities of their officers and crew.

It is well known to have been one of the most remarkable professional attributes, if I may call it so, of Nelson and Napoleon, that they never failed to discover at once, and, as it seemed, intuitively, what were the exact qualifications of the different persons with whom they had to deal. But, in reasoning from these great officers to others, we must recollect, that such transcendent sagacity and quickness of perception are given but to very few. The ordinary run of commanding officers, therefore, who can pretend to no such depth of judgment, ought always to be on the watch for those minute symptoms which, by peeping out on occasions like this, furnish a key to the whole character.

Probably, indeed, this is the very course originally adopted by the great master-spirits of the world: till at length the habit of rapid decision as to the characters of others, like all habits, becomes an unconscious process, even to those who exercise the power, while to lookers-on it naturally appears like intuition.

Such an acquaintance with the character of his people is frequently not only of the highest public service, but it may often save an officer from much injustice and remorse. At least I can recollect, on more than one occasion, having formed opinions to the prejudice of persons under me, and having treated them with a want of consideration, of which I had afterwards occasion sorely to repent, when some incident occurred to show how unjustly I had estimated their real merits. This sort of error in judgment is what I understand by the word prejudice, which steals so insensibly upon us, that, unless manfully and systematically resisted, it is apt to distort the whole course of our thoughts. Unfortunately, prejudice, like the faculty of memory, is its own judge. We fancy we shall remember a particular circumstance for ever, and stoutly declare we shall never forget it. Yet, if all trace of it fade from the recollection in the very next hour, how shall its former existence be recalled? Prejudice, in like manner, generally conceives itself to be just; and, yet unless novel circumstances arise to prove or disprove the soundness of its estimates, by what means shall the truth be disentangled from the delusion?

But I am quite forgetting Rockall!

While we were speculating upon one another's characters in the boats below, our faithful watchman, perched on the peak of the rock, suddenly called out, "I see the ship!" This announcement was answered by a simultaneous shout from the two boats' crews, which sent the flocks of gannets and sea-mews screaming to the right and left, far into the bosom of the fog.

An opening or lane in the mist had occurred, along which we could now see the frigate, far off, but crowding all sail, and evidently beating to windward. We lost as little time as possible in picking our shivering scout off the rock, an operation which cost nearly a quarter of an hour. This accomplished, away we rowed, at the utmost stretch of our oars, towards the ship.

We had hardly proceeded a quarter of a mile before the fog began to close behind our track, so as to shut out Rockall from our view. This we cared little about, as we not only still saw the ship, but trusted, from her movements, that she likewise saw the boats. Just at the moment however that we came to this satisfactory conclusion, she tacked, thereby proving that she had seen neither boats nor rock, but was merely groping about in search of her lost sheep. Had she continued on the course she was steering when we first saw her, she might have picked us up long before the fog came on again; but when she went about, this hope was destroyed. In a few minutes more, we, of course, lost sight of the frigate in the fog; and there we were, in a pretty mess, with no ship to receive us, and no island to hang on by!

It now became necessary to take an immediate part; and we decided at once to turn back in search of the rock. It was certainly a moment of bitter disappointment when we pulled round; and the interval between doing so and our regaining a resting-place was one of great anxiety. Nevertheless we made a good land-fall, and there was a wonderful degree of happiness attendant even upon this piece of success. Having again got hold of Rockall, we determined to abide by our firm friend till circumstances should render our return to the ship certain. In the mean time we amused ourselves in forming plans for a future residence on this desolate abode, in the event of the ship being blown away during the night. If the weather should become more stormy, and that our position to leeward was rendered unsafe, in consequence of the divided waves running round and meeting, it was resolved that we should abandon the heaviest of the two boats, and drag the other up to the brow of the rock, so as to form, when turned keel upwards, a sort of hurricane-house. These, and various other Robinson-Crusoe-kind of resources, helped to occupy our thoughts, half in jest, half in earnest, till, by the increased gloom, we knew that the sun had gone down. It now became indispensable to adopt some definite line of operations, for the angry-looking night was setting in fast.

Fortunately, we were saved from further trials of patience or ingenuity by the fog suddenly rising, as it is called, or dissipating itself in the air, so completely, that, to our great joy, we gained sight of the ship once more.

It appeared afterwards that they had not seen our little island from the Endymion nearly so soon as we discovered her; and she was, in consequence, standing almost directly away from us, evidently not knowing exactly whereabouts Rockall lay. This, I think, was the most anxious moment during the whole adventure; nor shall I soon forget the sensation caused by seeing the jib-sheet let fly, accompanied by other indications that the frigate was coming about.

I need not spin out this story any longer. It was almost dark when we got on board. Our first question was the reproachful one, "Why did you fire no guns to give us notice of your position?"

"Fire guns!" said they; "why, we have done nothing but blaze away every ten minutes for these last five or six hours."

Yet, strange to say, we had not heard one single discharge!

CHAPTER XXXIV.

A SEAMAN'S GRAVE.

THERE are few places better known to sailors than Madeira, I mean to those of Europe, and especially such as sail out of England. It lies directly in the path of almost every ship leaving the British Channel, the shores of the Bay of Biscay, and the coasts of the Peninsula, or those which flow out in a continuous stream from that singular funnel, or strait, the Gut of Gibraltar. It stands nearly in the centre of a circle, in the circumference of which, at the distance of less than two hundred leagues, are found Gibraltar, Cadiz, Lisbon, and the Azores. Teneriffe lies at the distance of eighty leagues, nearly due south of it; and the north-west coast of Africa a hundred and twenty leagues to the eastward. Nor does it seem too much to say, that this enchanting island enjoys almost all the advantages, with but few of the evils, of the remarkable places by which it is surrounded. Its latitude is the same as that of Morocco, and yet what a different degree of salubrity belongs to the atmosphere of these two spots! Madeira has all that is desirable of the warmth of the Gold Coast, without its fatal malaria, or its no less fatal despotism.

Madeira is never so cold as St. Michael's, in the Azores, or so sultry and relaxing as Lisbon; nor is it subject to the yellow fever of Cadiz, or to the confinement of Gibraltar. But it partakes of the real merits of the climate of all those places, without their violent fluctuations.

We may assist in fixing the position of such a place in our minds, by twirling round an artificial globe, and running along its parallel of latitude, so as to string upon it any other remarkable spots on the earth's surface which lie nearly at the same distance from the equator. Thus, the parallel of Madeira is found almost to touch Tripoli, Jerusalem, Cashmere, Nankin, Japan, California, Charleston, and Bermuda. In this circuit, what a variety of climates and nations are to be met with! And where is the fancy so torpid as not to be roused to some degree of curiosity and interest by the mere enumeration of such names? What, then, must be the solid delight of actually viewing them on the spot, in their own native dress, and under their own skies? Yet a certain apprenticeship is necessary, in order to enjoy this rich privilege to the utmost; for the first experiment is not always successful. I, at least, have found that it required many a visit to Madeira, and other places, before I felt sufficiently familiar with them to discover their true merits.

The truth of this seeming paradox will perhaps be soonest acknowledged by those who have had most experience in such matters. The first appearance of a totally new place bewilders the imagination; and by giving the fancy more to work upon than it can well arrange, is apt to interfere with wholesome, or even agreeable generalisation. On the second visit, when many of the minor details have been forgotten, and only the leading facts retained, we insensibly fall into a habit of classing things, which, being thus understood properly, may be enjoyed as they deserve. We are greatly helped in the acquisition of what may be called the language of sight-seeing, if we have opportunities of examining analogous places; just as our idiom and accent are improved by conversing with the natives of different parts of a country.

Thus, Lisbon and Madeira, both Portuguese places, or Corunna and Teneriffe, both Spanish, help materially to illustrate each other, although very different in many points. Madeira is, of course, much more like Lisbon than it is like Teneriffe; and yet an acquaintance with the scenery and people which are to be found along the base of that celebrated Peak, imparts a certain additional power of viewing similar objects in a Portuguese country. If circumstances give the voyager repeated opportunities of running the rounds of these places, his perception of what is interesting in each and all of them becomes sharper and sharper, and his pleasure in visiting them greater at every trial. So much so, that if he accidentally drops out of their acquaintance, and is not likely soon, if ever, to see them again, he feels almost as if he had bid adieu to friends in whose society he could well have passed his life.

What is true of places so like one another as those above enumerated, the Azores, the Canaries, Madeira, and the ever-romantic Spain, will be found to hold, to a certain useful extent, between any two regions whatsoever. Nor have I ever visited any corner of the globe, however remote, barren, uninhabited, or apparently profitless, that did not contribute some share to this reflected sort of interest. To a mind much accustomed to view new objects, scarcely anything can come amiss; for whatever is seen either gives out light, or receives it. For example, I remember, long after the period I am now writing about, happening to pass within sight of the Portuguese town of Goa in the East Indies—one of the last lingering possessions of the former European lords of the East. By the eyes of many of the party, this celebrated spot was viewed solely on its own merits, and as such it certainly had its share of interest. But to those amongst us who had seen Lagos, and Funchal, and Orotava, or St. Salvador, the scene was lighted up with tenfold brilliancy, and the imagination sent capering round the globe in search of illustrations to render the occasion more useful, as well as interesting.

When things are examined in this manner, each successive visit to the same scene is attended with two advantages of some value. Not only is the spot examined under the accumulated authority, if I may call it so, of the intermediate experience of other places; but the observations made at all those places may derive benefit, in their turn, from the improved knowledge communicated by this visit at the end of the series.

There is one illustration of this theory which may convey a distinct enough idea of my meaning to the mind of professional men, though perhaps I shall fail in making it quite intelligible to others. In that branch of navigation called hydrography, persons who are surveying coasts busy themselves

more in discovering the difference of longitude between point and point, than in seeking to determine their actual longitude reckoned from Greenwich. These differences are measured by chronometers, or by bases and triangles, without much regard, at that stage of the process, to the actual longitude of any one of the points. Occasions, however, do arise, from time to time, by which, under favourable circumstances, the longitude from Greenwich of some of the positions in the series is determined by means of astronomical observation. And it will be readily understood, that when this occurs even to one of the series whose differences have been previously ascertained, the longitude of all the rest becomes known likewise.

Somewhat in the same way, when wandering backwards and forwards between place and place on the earth's surface, we may carefully note differences or resemblances between national characteristics; and it can scarcely ever happen that an observation made at one spot shall not tell at all the rest in the traveller's path. A man, indeed, who leaves his own country, and establishes himself permanently in another, may carry with him a set of opinions and feelings, apparently fixed by long habit into his very existence. But if he takes firm root in a foreign land, he will gradually lose, by the process of grafting, so much of the sap and substance of the original stem, that if, after a time, he return to his native land, with his ancient prejudices diluted by foreign intercourse, he will scarcely be able to recal his old ideas, or to credit that he could ever have viewed things as his memory assures him he once did. But even now, when he fancies, good easy mortal, that he has finally got rid of prejudice and error, he may, in fact, still be wrong. The more he travels, in short, the more he will discover that very material changes may take place in all his views. And thus, supposing him to be honest, and to have truth for his sole object, he will go moving on, under a gradually increasing conviction that he has more and more to learn.

In the middle of the summer of 1809, we received on board one of those most interesting of all invalids, of whom it has been my fortune to see but too many in the course of my life. I need scarcely say, I allude to a person in what is so emphatically termed a decline, where the downhill road of life is travelled over at a rapid pace, sometimes so easily and smoothly, that the journey to the poor patient appears a party of pleasure. At other times the wretched way is all broken up, and in pain and sorrow the victim of delicacy feels life dropping away at every pore; the body wasted, but the mind entire; the spirits unsubdued, and the hopes and capabilities of enjoyment as fresh apparently as ever, while the cruel necessity of retiring from this happy world is obvious and immediate. There are perhaps few incidents in the course of ordinary life more fertile in those instructions, of which we all stand in need, than the rise, progress, and termination of this class of diseases, during which it may be so truly said, that 'in the midst of life we are in death.' For it is scarcely possible not to feel in some degree impressed with a sense of awe, when conscious of being in the presence of a person who, in a very few days, it may be hours, must be laid in the tomb. In the present instance, there was not a man on board the Endymion who could help feeling personally interested in the fate of our poor invalid, or fail to be softened and improved by the presence of so much excellence, and beauty, and youth, all sinking together into the grave.

Our passenger was a young married woman of rank, accompanied by her husband and brother; and anything more patient under suffering, or more resigned, was never seen. She won all hearts. The weather was delightfully fine, the breeze fair, and the sea smooth the whole way; and as we gradually stole into more genial regions, the change of climate was hailed by every one on board with unfeigned joy, not on their own account, but on that of their guest.

The sea-air, the exercise, and the new scene altogether, conspired to revive the drooping sufferer in a manner so extraordinary, that it excited the hopes of every one who had little experience of the treacherous ways of this sad complaint. I remember a moment when she herself was the only person on board who betrayed any distrust of this revival being more than a hectic flush, like the aurora borealis of the region we had quitted, vanishing as it came. When attentively watched, it might be discovered that she wore the look which, as Lord Byron expresses it, 'is not of this world;' though, to general or careless observation, she was the most cheerful and confident person about herself of any one in the ship. A group of the seamen might often be seen standing on the forecastle, either looking aft in silence at the couch of flags and boat-cloaks spread on the quarter-deck, or discussing, in a low tone, the chances of our carrying the 'lady passenger' safe to the Island, as Madeira is generally called by the men.

Independently of any personal interest, the sailors are always very desirous that no one should die on board; or rather, they have a great objection to the body of any one who has died remaining amongst them. This is a superstition easily accounted for amongst men whose entire lives are passed, as it were, on the very edge of the grave, and who have quite enough, as they suppose, to remind them of their mortality, without the actual presence of its effects. An idea prevails amongst them, that sharks will follow a ship for a whole voyage which has a corpse on board; and the loss of a mast, or the long duration of a foul wind, or any other inconvenience, is sure to be ascribed to the same influence. Accordingly, when a man dies on board ship, there is an obvious anxiety amongst the crew to get rid of their late shipmate as speedily as possible.

It need not be mentioned, that the surgeon is in constant attendance upon the dying man, who has generally been removed from his hammock to a cot, which is larger and more commodious, and is placed within a screen on one side of the sick-bay, as the hospital of the ship is called. It is usual for the captain to pass through this place, and to speak to the men, every morning; and I imagine there is hardly a ship in the service in which wine, fresh meat, and any other supplies recommended by the surgeon, are not sent from the tables of the captain and officers to such of the sick men as require a more generous diet than

the ship's stores provide. After the carver in the gun-room has helped his messmates, he generally turns to the surgeon, and says, "Doctor, what shall I send to the sick?" But, even without this, the steward would certainly be taken to task were he to omit inquiring, as a matter of course, what was wanted in the sick bay. The restoration of the health of the invalids by such supplies is perhaps not more important, however, than the moral influence of the attention on the part of the officers.

I have generally observed, also, a most valuable effect produced on the minds of the survivors by the captain attending the death-bed of any of his crew. It is astonishing, indeed, how far such well-timed notice, however small, goes with the sailors. And it is of importance to remember, that this is only one of numberless means by which a judicious officer may always strengthen his hands, and improve the discipline of his ship, at an extremely small sacrifice of time, and none at all of his true dignity. For the men are vastly easier managed when they have reason to believe their superiors enter into and respect their feelings, than when, as sometimes happens, they see them act as if they scarcely considered themselves of the same species. Sailors, indeed, will submit cheerfully to much greater hardships, and work with double energy, at the word of an officer, however strict, provided they are made sensible that while he is regulated by a sense of justice in his severity, he likewise considers an attention to their comforts and happiness a part of his duty.

I would, accordingly, strongly recommend every captain to be seen (no matter for how short a time) by the bedside of any of his crew whom the surgeon may report as dying. Not occasionally, and in the flourishing style with which we read of great generals visiting hospitals, but uniformly, and in the quiet sobriety of real kindness, as well as hearty consideration for the feelings of a man falling at his post in the service of his country. The éclat of such a death is inferior, no doubt, to that which is bestowed in battle; but we should recollect, that on this very account the sacrifice deserves more attention at our hands. A man who is killed in action has a brilliant Gazette to record his exploits; and the whole country may be said to attend his death-bed. But the merit is not less, or may even be much greater, of the soldier or sailor who dies of a fever in a distant land, his story untold, and his sufferings unseen. In warring against climates unsuited to his frame, he may have encountered, in the public service, enemies often more formidable than those who handle pike and gun. There should be nothing left undone, therefore, at such a time, to show not only to the dying man, but to his shipmates and his family at home, that his services are appreciated.

I remember, on one occasion, hearing the captain of a ship say to a poor fellow who was almost gone, that he was glad to see him so cheerful at such a moment; and begged to know if he had anything to say.

"I hope, sir," said the expiring seaman with a smile, "I have done my duty to your satisfaction?"

"That you have, my lad," said his commander, "and to the satisfaction of your country, too."

"That is all I wanted to know, sir," replied the man.

These few common-place words cost the captain not five minutes of his time, but were long recollected with gratitude by the people under his orders, and contributed, along with many other graceful acts of considerate attention, to fix his authority as firmly as he could desire.

If a sailor who knows he is dying has a captain who pleases him, he is very likely to send a message by the surgeon to beg a visit; not often to trouble his commander with any commission, but merely to say something at parting. No officer, of course, would ever refuse to grant such an interview; but it appears to me it should always be volunteered; for many men may wish it, whose habitual respect would disincline them to take such a liberty, even at the moment when all distinctions are about to cease.

Very shortly after poor Jack dies, he is prepared for his deep-sea grave by his messmates, who, with the assistance of the sail-maker, and in the presence of the master-at-arms, sew him up in his hammock, and having placed a couple of cannon-shot at his feet, they rest the body (which now not a little resembles an Egyptian mummy) on a spare grating. Some portion of the bedding and clothes are always made up in the package, apparently to prevent the form being too much seen. It is then carried aft, and, being put across the after-hatchway, the union jack is thrown over all. Sometimes it is placed between two of the guns, under the half deck; but generally, I think, he is laid where I have stated, just abaft the mainmast.

I should have mentioned before, that as soon as the surgeon's ineffectual professional offices are at an end, he walks to the quarter-deck, and reports to the officer of the watch that one of his patients has just expired. At whatever hour of the day or night this occurs, the captain is immediately made acquainted with the circumstance. At the same time the master-at-arms is ordered by the officer of the watch to take possession of the dead man's clothes; and his messmates, soon afterwards, proceed to dress and prepare the body for burial.

Next day, generally about eleven o'clock, the bell on which the half-hours are struck is tolled for the funeral by one of the quarter-masters of the watch below, or by one of the deceased's messmates; and all who choose to be present assemble on the gangways, booms, and round the mainmast, while the fore-part of the quarter-deck is occupied by the officers.

In some ships, and it ought perhaps to be so in all, it is made imperative on the officers and crew to attend this ceremony. If such attendance be a proper mark of respect to a professional brother, as it surely is, it ought to be enforced, and not left to caprice. There may, indeed, be times of great fatigue, when it would harass men and officers needlessly to oblige them to come on deck for every funeral, and upon such occasions the watch on deck may be sufficient. Or, when some dire disease gets into a ship, and is cutting down her crew by its daily and nightly, or, it may be, hourly ravages, and when two or three times in a watch the ceremony must be repeated; those only whose turn it is to be on deck need be assembled.

In such fearful times, the funeral is generally made to follow close upon the death.

While the people are repairing to the quarter-deck, in obedience to the summons of the bell, the grating on which the body is placed, being lifted from the main-deck by the messmates of the man who has died, is made to rest across the lee-gangway. The stanchions for the man-ropes of the side are unshipped, and an opening made at the after-end of the hammock-netting, sufficiently large to allow a free passage.

The body is still covered by the flag already mentioned, with the feet projecting a little over the gunwale, while the messmates of the deceased range themselves on each side. A rope, which is kept out of sight in these arrangements, is then made fast to the grating, for a purpose which will be seen presently.

When all is ready, the chaplain, if there be one on board, or, if not, the captain, or any of the officers he may direct to officiate, appears on the quarter-deck, and commences the beautiful service, which, though but too familiar to most ears, I have observed never fails to rivet the attention even of the rudest and least reflecting. Of course, the bell has ceased to toll, and every one stands in silence and uncovered as the prayers are read. Sailors, with all their looseness of habits, are well disposed to be sincerely religious; and when they have fair play given them, they will always, I believe, be found to stand on as good vantage ground in this respect as their fellow-countrymen on shore. Be this as it may, there can be no more attentive, or apparently reverent auditory, than assembles on the deck of a ship of war, on the occasion of a shipmate's burial.

There is no material difference in the form of this service from that used on the shore, excepting in the place where allusion is made to the return of the body to its parent earth. Perhaps it might have been as well to have left this unchanged, for the ocean may well be taken, in this sense, as part of the earth; but since an alteration of the words was thought necessary, it could not have been made in better taste.

The land service for the burial of the dead contains the following words:—

"Forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God, of his great mercy, to take unto himself the soul of our dear brother here departed, we therefore commit his body to the ground; earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust; in sure and certain hope," &c.

Every one, I am sure, who has attended the funeral of a friend, (and who will this not include?) must recollect the solemnity of that stage of the ceremony, where, as the above words are pronounced, there are cast into the grave three successive portions of earth, which, falling on the coffin, send up a hollow, mournful sound, resembling no other that I know.

In the burial service at sea, the part quoted above is varied in the following very striking and solemn manner:—

"Forasmuch," &c.—"we therefore commit his body to the deep, to be turned into corruption, looking for the resurrection of the body, when the sea shall give up her dead, and the life of the world to come," &c.

At the commencement of this part of the service, one of the seamen stoops down, and disengages the flag from the remains of his late shipmate, while the others, at the words "we commit his body to the deep," project the grating right into the sea. The body, being loaded with shot at one end, glances off the grating, plunges at once into the ocean; and,

> "In a moment, like a drop of rain,
> He sinks into its depths with bubbling groan,
> Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd, and
> unknown."

This part of the ceremony is rather less impressive than the correspondent part on land; but still there is something solemn, as well as startling, in the sudden splash, followed by the sound of the grating, as it is towed along under the main-chains.

In a fine day at sea, in smooth water, and when all the ship's company and officers are assembled, the ceremony just described, although a melancholy one, as it must always be, is often so pleasing, all things considered, that it is calculated to leave even cheerful impressions on the mind.

Occasions, however, as gloomy as any sad heart could conceive, do sometimes occur for a sea funeral, sufficient to strike the sternest natures. The most impressive which I recollect, of the numbers I have witnessed, was in the flag-ship, on the coast of North America.

There was a poor little middy on board, so delicate and fragile, that the sea was clearly no fit profession for him: but he or his friends thought otherwise; and as he had a spirit for which his frame was no match, he soon gave token of decay. This boy was a great favourite with everybody; the sailors smiled whenever he passed, as they would have done to a child; the officers petted him, and coddled him up with all sorts of good things; and his messmates, in a style which did not altogether please him, but which he could not well resist, as it was meant most kindly, nicknamed him Dolly. Poor fellow! he was long remembered afterwards. I forget what his particular complaint was; but he gradually sunk, and at last went out just as a taper might have done, exposed to such gusts of wind as blew in that tempestuous region. He died in the morning; but it was not until the evening that he was prepared for a seaman's grave.

I remember, in the course of the day, going to the side of the boy's hammock, and on laying my hand upon his breast being astonished to find it still warm, so much so, that I almost imagined I could feel the heart beat. This, of course, was a vain fancy; but I was greatly attached to my little companion, being then not much taller *myself*, and I was soothed and gratified, in a childish way, by discovering *that my* friend, though many hours dead, had *not yet* acquired the usual revolting chilness.

In after-years I have sometimes thought of this incident, when reflecting on the pleasing doctrine of the Spaniards, that as soon as children die, they are translated into angels, without any of those 'cold obstructions' which, they pretend, intercept and retard the souls of other mortals. The peculiar circumstances connected with the funeral which I am about to describe, and the fanciful superstitions of the sailors upon the occasion, have combined to fix the whole scene in my memory.

Something occurred during the day to prevent the funeral taking place at the usual hour; and the ceremony was deferred till long after sunset. The evening was extremely dark, and it was blowing a treble-reefed topsail breeze. We had just sent down the top-gallant yards, and made all snug for a boisterous winter's night. As it became necessary to have lights to see what was done, several signal lanterns were placed on the break of the quarter-deck and others along the hammock railings on the lee-gangway. The whole ship's company and officers were assembled, some on the booms, others in the boats; while the main-rigging was crowded half way up to the cat-harpings. Overhead, the mainsail, illuminated as high as the yard by the lamps, was bulging forwards under the gale, which was rising every minute, and straining so violently at the main-sheet, that there was some doubt whether it might not be necessary to interrupt the funeral in order to take sail off the ship. The lower deck ports lay completely under water, and several times the muzzles of the main-deck guns were plunged into the sea; so that the end of the grating on which the remains of poor Dolly were laid once or twice nearly touched the tops of the waves, as they foamed and hissed past. The rain fell fast on the bare heads of the crew, dropping also on the officers, during all the ceremony, from the foot of the mainsail, and wetting the leaves of the prayer-book. The wind sighed over us amongst the wet shrouds, with a note so mournful, that there could not have been a more appropriate dirge.

The ship, pitching violently, strained and creaked from end to end: so that, what with the noise of the sea, the rattling of the ropes, and the whistling of the wind, hardly one word of the service could be distinguished. The men, however, understood, by a motion of the captain's hand, when the time came, and the body of our dear little brother was committed to the deep.

So violent a squall was sweeping past the ship at this moment, that no sound was heard of the usual splash, which made the sailors allege that their young favourite never touched the water at all, but was at once carried off in the gale to his final resting-place!

CHAPTER XXXV.

MADEIRA.

Our voyage to Madeira was favourable to the last; and we had the satisfaction of thinking, that, as far as depended upon the nautical part of this almost hopeless experiment, our interesting passenger had the fairest chance of recovery. We had favourable winds, a smooth sea, and a delicious balmy climate, the whole way; to which must be added the comforts of a first-rate frigate, admirably fitted up. But it was all of no avail.

Madeira lies in latitude 32½, nearly ten degrees north of the tropic of Cancer, and three or four beyond the northern limit of the trade-winds. These mysterious currents in the air, so useful to the moderns, were sorely perplexing to the early voyagers, and enough to have broken the heart of a less adventurous or sagacious man than Columbus. When I have an opportunity of describing them, I hope to be able to show how beautifully they fall into the order of physical laws, and how much more, therefore, a navigator disciplined by science, who really knows what he is about, may take advantage of them, than one who merely acts by rule and compass. To ignorant eyes, whether practised or not, these great aerial currents offer nothing for observation but the means of advancing in the voyage; and as they are generally quite unconscious of the principles or laws by which the phenomena are regulated, such navigators act completely in the dark; and, being naturally enough misled by the influence of names, often commit the grossest blunders.

In the mean time I must return to Madeira, which we reached on the tenth day from England; and on the fourteenth morning from leaving London, our amiable sufferer was safely landed in almost a new world. The climate was so genial, and so dissimilar to that she had been snatched from, that had its healing aid been sought early enough, it might, very possibly, have proved propitious. Much precious time, indeed, is generally lost; and owing to this sad mistake, by far the greater number of patients come to Madeira only to die, without the comforts they have abandoned, too late, at home, far from their natural friends and connexions, and completely deprived of those conveniences and comforts to which they have been accustomed.

From what I saw of Madeira during many visits at different seasons of the year, I had long been of opinion that this delightful island formed one of the best, if not the very best place in which a consumptive patient might hope to find a cure, or rather, to which a person having a consumptive tendency might resort in hopes of preventing the fatal access of a disease which, at certain stages, is but too well known to be beyond the reach either of climate or medical skill. I was not aware, however, till lately, how completely this idea of the superior advantages of Madeira was borne out by the opinion of the best qualified professional men, especially by Dr. (now Sir James) Clark, whose very interesting work, on the Influence of Climate in the Prevention and Cure of Chronic Diseases, may be consulted with great advantage on this subject.

Our poor passenger's case was precisely one of those which, had this work been published twenty years sooner, would never have been referred to Madeira for a cure. Of comforts, indeed, she had no want; for she was received into the house of one of those splendid persons, the great English Madeira merchants, who, with a sort of oriental hospitality and luxury, in character with their happy climate, used to fling their doors wide open to receive strangers coming to the island. In those days there was great difficulty in procuring good lodgings; but I am told that accommodations for families, or for single persons, may now be hired by those who have not the advantage of such introductions, or who are unwilling to encumber these most hospitable of men with the anxious companionship of invalids.

Most if not all the merchants have two houses; one, of course, in the city, where their business is transacted, another lying beyond the noise and bustle of the port. Many of these gentlemen reside occasionally at their country-seats, on the

side of the mountain which takes its rise from the beach at the town of Funchal, and ascends with a steep face to the height of many thousands of feet above the sea. The upper parts of all are so lofty, that there is *no* vegetation finds root upon them; and although there be no coating of perpetual snow, I believe ice may be discovered, at all seasons, in the crevices which surround the well-known Caldeira, cauldron, or crater, near the summit. Be this as it may, I am sure that by going up the hill, or coming down it, a range of many degrees of the thermometer may be commanded. So that, if the taste of an infirm person, or the peculiarities of his complaint, require a heat of 60° or 70°, he may live as long as he pleases in a climate that is best suited to his recovery.

The medical gentlemen resident on the spot reprobate in strong terms the inutility, not to say cruelty, of sending out patients in the advanced stages of consumption. "Generally speaking," observes Dr. Renton of Madeira, as quoted by Sir James Clark, "the poor patient himself has nothing to do with the arrangements; and it is principally in obedience to medical advice that he undertakes a voyage productive of nothing but mischief and disappointment. So uniform is the result of this practice, that the annual importation of invalids from England is thought a fit subject for ridicule among the boatmen, on landing these unfortunates on their island. 'La vai mais hum Inglez á Laranjeira'—'There goes another Englishman to the Orange-tree,' such being the name of the burying-ground of the Protestants*."

Sir James Clark gives a table, from which it appears, that of 47 cases of confirmed consumption, no fewer than 32 died within six months after their arrival at Madeira; while out of 35 cases of incipient consumption, or of those wherein there was merely reason to dread this disease, 26 were cured, or, at all events, they left the island much improved.

The same authority, Dr. Renton, long a resident at the island in question, further remarks, that "when consumption has proceeded to any considerable extent, he should consider it the duty of a medical attendant not only not to advise the adoption of such a measure, but most earnestly to dissuade from it those who, from hearsay evidence of the recovery of persons in circumstances similar to their own, may feel disposed to fly to it as a last resource."

"That great and lasting benefit," he adds, "is to be derived even from a temporary residence in the climate of Madeira, which is probably inferior to no other in cases where pulmonary disease is merely threatened, or where strong family predisposition to it exists, many living examples sufficiently prove. But even under such comparatively favourable circumstances, it ought to be strongly impressed on the mind of the invalid, that half-measures are worse than useless, and that no advantage is to be derived from climate, however fine, unless it be seconded by the utmost caution and prudence on his part†."

The whole of the work alluded to is interesting, and, I should think, valuable to almost every reader; for the number of persons in England is probably small who are so fortunate as to have no friends or relatives whose health, spirits, and even fortune, do not in some degree depend on climate. The chapter, however, which engaged my attention most, was that which relates to Madeira, probably because the opinions contained in it were almost identical with my own, formed on the spot.

Sir James Clark's very decided conclusions, after discussing the various professional reports sent to him from the island, are worthy of so much attention, that I should venture to quote a page or two from his valuable work, were it not *in the* hands of every one who cares about such subjects. I am fully satisfied, however, from personal observation, that his doctrines are sound, and his advice well calculated to have the double effect of saving much fruitless misery to patients in hopeless cases, and affording the very fairest chance which the nature of things allows to those who are still within the reach of cure. But I must refer to the book itself for more particular information on these subjects.

Some people prefer both living and dying in a temperate, or even in a cold atmosphere; but even these may be accommodated at Madeira. Indeed, I am acquainted with no place in which such a variety of climates may be commanded with certainty as in this beautiful island—beautiful in every sense; for the scenery is so varied, that almost all tastes may be suited. The soil is volcanic, though there has been no eruption within the memory of man; and all those fruits and flowers which thrive upon the rich soil of decomposed lavas are here produced in great abundance. The very name 'Madera,' signifying wooded, was given to it by the first discoverers, from the uncommon luxuriance of its foliage.

To persons familiar with the scenery of Switzerland or Italy, that of Madeira will not, of course, wear the very novel dress that it must do to the upturned eyes of a genuine Cockney, whose conceptions of the sublime and beautiful in mountain scenery have been moulded on the lofty ridges of Highgate and Hampstead, or the celebrated cone of Primrose Hill. But I have seldom seen any new-comer, whatever his experience might have been, who was not more struck with Madeira than with almost any other spot in the world. It does not very much matter on which side the island is approached. I have tried it in a great many ways, and found them all delightful, and all striking. Take it where you will, the aspect is always such as to make you long eagerly to get on shore, that you may climb the side of the mountain, or bask in the sunshine on some of the knolls peeping out from amongst the rich coating of trees, unknown to your sight till now, or to luxuriate in the belts of shade hanging along the bottom of the innumerable deep ravines which intersect the surface of the island on every side.

On steering towards Madeira, when at the distance of thirty or forty miles, or even considerably more, persons in the habit of looking out for the land will often see it long before others possessed of equally good eyes, but not accustomed to such observations. The truth is, that inexperienced people are not aware what they ought to look for; and when at length they perceive the land, generally exclaim, "Oh! I thought it would appear much higher!" For it takes a considerable time to understand the effects produced on

* Clark on Climate, 2d Edition, 1830, page 192.

† Dr. Clark, page 194.

objects by distance. The curvature of the earth, in the first place, is found to conceal much more of an island, or tower, or any high object, than most persons are at all prepared for. On shore, there are so many other things to fill the interval, and to break up the surface, that a correct estimate of the curvature of the earth is almost out of the question, except in great alluvial districts, such as Bengal or Louisiana, where, by proper management, it may be rendered quite conspicuous. At sea, we have perpetual opportunities of trying these experiments; and I confess, for one, though by this time pretty well convinced of the globular shape of the earth, that I never tire of repeating them.

I remember once, when standing in for the British Channel, the look-out man on the fore yard-arm said he saw a light on the weather-bow. The evening was dark, though clear, with the wind about north, and the sea as smooth as a mill-pond. The light reported was that on the Scilly Islands, then distant from us between fifteen and twenty miles. I was officer of the watch; and being anxious to ascertain that it was not, as so often happens, a star rising in the east, but truly St. Agnes' light, I went up the main rigging, and sure enough saw the splendid beacon in question performing its periodical revolutions in fine style.

As there was not the slightest swell, I determined to try within what degree of nicety the curvature of the earth could be made sensible to actual observation, and therefore came slowly down the rigging, ratlin by ratlin, till the light was lost. I then mounted again till it came in sight once more, and so on till it was brought within one step; that is to say, when standing on the upper of two ratlins, the light could be seen distinctly, while from the lower one it was not discernible. In order to reduce this to the smallest observable limits, I then stood on the upper ratlin, and bent my body gradually, till the light appeared to go out. By this means it was ascertained that a range of less than six inches was sufficient either to obliterate a small and well-defined object, or to bring it into view.

With respect to such an island as Madeira, or Teneriffe, the experiment is of necessity a much looser affair; because, when the mountain's top comes close to the horizon, the land generally melts into the sky, by reason of the haze which hangs in the lower strata of the atmosphere: the distance, and the amount of interposed air, being increased in proportion to the height of the land. So that, long before the mere curvature of the earth would conceal an island so high as Madeira, it would vanish from other causes. This observation varies with the state of the weather, and with those obscure phenomena in meteorology which enable the air to hold moisture in such perfect solution, that at one time it may be totally invisible, while at another it shall be curdled into clouds, or thrown down in rain. I have occasionally seen the high ridge of Madeira just peering above the horizon, as sharp and cutting as that of a mountain not three leagues off. But this is rare; and, generally speaking, it is not seen till about a third of its perpendicular height is above the horizon. In such cases, it sometimes appears to require a long time to run up to it, even when the wind is fair. The spectator's impatience, especially if it be his first visit, far outstrips the lazy pace of the ship. It seems to him as if the island flitted away nearly as fast as the vessel sailed towards it. This delusion is sometimes so strong, that the only method of convincing one's self of the contrary, is to go below for half an hour, and then come up to take a look at the land. The change in the apparent height and distance is then as wonderful as the slowness had seemed before.

On nearing the land, so as to get sight of the houses and fields, the church spires and the vessels' masts, we are furnished with something like a scale wherewith to estimate heights, distances, and even magnitudes. The mountains we had previously complained of for being so low, have risen into importance in our imagination. After this stage of the voyage has been reached, a totally novel set of objects meets our view, and every mile augments the interest. Foreign-looking houses, strange trees and rocks, stand round the landscape; grotesque boats come alongside, filled with copper-coloured people in fantastic dresses, speaking an unknown language. On reaching the anchorage such a multitude of new and striking objects rush upon the observation, that the fancy is often crowded to excess, partly with what it actually beholds, partly with vague recollections of drawings of foreign scenes, and partly with comparisons between what has been left elsewhere, and what is actually present. We feel, upon the whole, much delighted, like a child at its first pantomime; but, I scarcely know why, there is often a dash of pain along with all this gratification, arising, perhaps, from the bewildered state of our senses, and the difficulty of arranging our new information.

Things appear less involved next day; and I remember to this hour the confused consciousness of satisfaction with which I awoke after the first night's sleep at Madeira, and struggled to disentangle the wild scenery of my dreams from that of my waking observation the day before, which, indeed, was scarcely less wild. I ran to the window, which looked into a verandah, and wrapping a cloak over my shoulders, leaped into the open air. Everything was now still, and a heavy dew had settled, almost like rain-drops, upon all the vine-leaves. The land-breeze of the night had long blown itself out, and the sea in the roads was so perfectly smooth that every vessel looked double. The rolling of the surf, though close at hand, could scarcely be heard; but it was the only sound that broke the entire stillness of the scene.

The highest peaks of the mountain could be seen just catching the first rays of the sun; and their shadows being now stretched out in the opposite direction from that in which they had been cast over-night, the aspect of the island was wholly changed. The desire we felt to leave the lower districts, to travel in the region of the clouds, was so greatly increased by this enchanting sunrise, that we yielded with reluctance to the suggestions of our host, to wait till after breakfast. He promised to furnish one of my brother-officers and myself with horses and guides, and added, that if we liked it, we might dine with him in his country-house, far up on the side of the mountain, where we might have a trial of their cooler climates.

I am sure that if Aladdin had been present to offer us the accommodation of his lamp, we could have demanded nothing more delightful at the hands of the Genii. To complete our happiness, we possessed in our host one of the kindest, most gentleman-like, and obliging persons I ever met with in any part of the world. Indeed, it is not easy to describe how much it adds to the enjoyment of such scenes, to discover, in regions far removed from home, those intellectual charms which, indigenous to no region in particular, flourish under every sun.

I may take this opportunity of mentioning, that on many a subsequent occasion, both in the East and in the West, but especially in the East, I have been surprised to find myself in situations where the actual enjoyment came as fully up to the promise of the most enthusiastic previously conceived wish, as it certainly did on this occasion at Madeira. So far from these repeated instances of enjoyment fatiguing, or even satisfying curiosity, they generally give fresh ardour to the pursuit of novelty; and, by quickening the faculties of observation at every successive step, tend to enlarge the means of further gratification and improvement.

To some persons such declarations may seem extravagant; but those who have tried the greatest number of experiments, will, I think, generally be the readiest to allow, that even the simplest beauties of nature, when duly selected and combined, are more than a match for the brightest creations of mere fancy. At all events, one of the most vigorous-minded writers of any age made no scruple of confessing how far his imagination fell short in the conception of natural scenery:

> "Yet there are things, whose strong reality
> Outshines our fairy land! in shape and hues
> More beautiful than our fantastic sky,
> And the strange constellations which the Muse
> O'er her wild universe is skilful to diffuse *."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

MADEIRA.—TRIP TO THE MOUNTAIN.

We set out from Funchal after breakfast, on a pair of stout little ponies, and galloped away under the feeling that we had before us quite as much enjoyment as we chose to grasp, and far more than we could ever hope to tell about. The first point at which we aimed was a romantic-looking white church, called "Nossa Senhora do Monte," peeping out from amongst the chesnuts and vines, and all sorts of rich green foliage, with which the side of the mountain is clad, even to a distance considerably beyond that elevated spot. In running into the bay, the day before, every eye was directed to this striking object, which was dubbed by all hands 'the convent,' though convent it certainly was none, and many vows were made that its fair inmates should be visited. In this one respect, I must fairly own that performance and promise are sadly out of keeping; and I warn my roving successors in Catholic countries, before they visit convents in search of youth and beauty under the veil, to get rid of the fancies suggested by Mrs. Radcliffe and others.

Our guide, for some time, could not understand what we were at when we desired him to take us to the convent, and pointed up the hill. We had been in Portugal, it is true; but the prejudices we had picked up in Spain against the language of the neighbouring country, or perhaps our imperfect opportunities of learning it, had kept us in ignorance of Portuguese. Our present communications were carried on in Castilian, interlarded, when we became impatient, with a touch of English; for John Bull, when he is in a rage, fancies no outlandish man, as he calls all the rest of the world, can fail to understand his strong terms. The lads who accompanied us could jabber nothing but the dialect of the island, which probably bears the same relation to that spoken at Lisbon which the English of Bermuda does to that of Bristol. Nevertheless, we contrived to make ourselves understood; for, all over the world, your guides are fellows so much accustomed to a variety of masters, that they soon learn how intimate the connexion is between a stranger's liberality and his satisfaction with himself. Accordingly, when the glitter of a dollar meets their eye, they seldom make difficulties, but fall into their master's humour in a moment. At all events, our companions, finding us determined to call the church a convent, a convent they consented to vote it, and away we trudged up the hill.

I am afraid to say what the angle of inclination of the road may be which leads directly up the mountain from the town of Funchal; but it is by far the steepest I have ever seen travelled over in any country; and to a horse unaccustomed to it, or shod in the usual way, would afford no footing whatever. At first starting, we could scarcely believe it possible that our horses were intended to climb such a precipice as it appeared; but the guides gave them a sound bang with a long pole on the haunches, accompanied by an oath set to the music of a Portuguese yell. The fellows then caught hold of the horses' tails to assist themselves in the ascent, and away we scampered like so many heathen deities, each mounted on his fiery Pegasus, and bound on a voyage to the upper skies!

This sort of scramble between earth and heaven became a good-enough joke as soon as we ascertained that it was safe; but in truth it was not a little alarming, at first, to be travelling up a surface so steep, that, under ordinary circumstances, the danger of a capsize would have been most imminent. It really appeared, that if the horses had slipped and fallen, both they and their riders must have rolled down, heels over head, for a mile or two, with a velocity accelerated at every bump, till they reached the town. The idea also sometimes crossed our minds, that by jerking the bridles too smartly, the horses, making already such a great angle with the horizon, might assume the perpendicular, and, urged by the momentum of their elevation, fairly topple backwards, in which case there was nothing to bring us up, till we reached our native element amongst the shipping. No such mischance occurred, however, though the centre of gravity of the ponies was shifted back more than we sometimes thought safe, by the tugging of the guides, who made no apology for holding our nags by the tails. We ventured once or twice, when apprehen-

* Childe Harold, *Canto IV.* Stanza vi.

sive of tumbling over, to enter into some remonstrance; but John Portuguese made no other reply than by a thundering thump with his pole, which whistled by our heads, and, falling on the wretched beasts' rumps, threatened to crush them to the ground. The stout little ponies, however, never slipped or stumbled once all the way up; and we took advantage of the first stop to investigate the cause of so curious a phenomenon in horsemanship.

The guides, who probably conceived the roads in every other part of the world to be equally steep, were surprised at our turning up the horses' feet to see by what possible conjuration they could avoid slipping down the hill. The mystery explained itself at a glance. The horses' shoes were made somewhat after the fashion of those worn by our great-grandmothers, with heels at least an inch high. These spikes were let into the hind part of the shoe, like long frost-nails, only stronger, and, in fact, integral parts of the shoe; but as this claw or cramp-iron alone would be insufficient to prevent riders (especially nautical riders) from sliding downwards, it is necessary to adapt the hill to the horses' feet, as well as the feet to the hill. In this view the roads of Madeira are paved in the most regular manner with smooth stones, each about half the size of a man's fist. These are not exactly round, but slightly pointed, and made to stand up in such a way as to leave a hollow space between each. Hence it is impossible for the horse to put his foot anywhere that the spikes in his heels will not find a secure lodgment. Even if these rest at first on the top of the stone, they glance off, and fix themselves in a moment in such a way that to slip is impracticable. Of this we were soon convinced, and the ascent became as easy and natural to us as if we had never tried any other method. But the amount of faith in these securities required to be much greater on coming down again. The road then seemed so much steeper and more dangerous, that our nerves upon one occasion not being quite equal to the trial, we fairly dismounted. It really looked like riding down the stair of a cellar more than along His Most Faithful Majesty's highway. But here again a fresh evil beset us. The small sharp-pointed stones of the road struck so keenly into our feet, that after a quarter of a mile's rumble, we were fain to remount, under the ill-repressed grins of the two Portuguese boys, who doubtless wrote us down in their list of English mules, whose obstinacy it had been their trade during many years to humour.

Each guide was armed with a long stick, with which he belaboured his pony in the most merciless way, and at every blow added insult to injury, by showering all the epithets of abuse he could think of, in tones of anger, reproach, and entreaty, and all the while hanging upon the tail, as if his object was to retard, not to advance the march.

These men dress like the rest of the peasantry, in a coarse white cotton frock, with wide sleeves, and loose linen breeches or drawers, open at the knee. Although these inexpressibles are furnished with buttons and holes, they are never fixed; a fashion prevalent both in Spain and Portugal. Round the body is buttoned a blue cloth waistcoat, over which, but only in rainy weather, may be drawn a jacket, not unlike that worn by sailors. In general, however, this part of their apparel is flung in a careless manner over the left shoulder; and not a little dandyism enters into its adjustments. Our guides, at least, were perpetually shifting it about and redisposing its folds, exactly as one sees the Spaniards fidgetting with the festoons of their graceful capotes. Most of the labouring people of Madeira are remarkably athletic in their forms; but their brawny legs are generally concealed in yellow boots, their feet, I need scarcely say, being guiltless of stockings. On the head is placed a neat blue cloth bonnet, lined with red, somewhat in the shape of a mitre. On each side of this covering there stands out, queerly enough, a little red knot, like an ear, formed by a portion of the lining turned upwards; from under this cap a profusion of glossy black hair falls over the shoulders, in a style sufficiently picturesque.

The female peasants are mostly dressed in dark blue gowns and petticoats, of a coarse stuff, with a coloured showy handkerchief thrown over their shoulders. Many of them wear a white square veil cast loosely on the head, so that one of its corners may hang down behind nearly to the middle of the back. The lower orders of Madeira appear to enjoy a prodigious advantage over the higher classes in personal appearance—a distinction they owe, no doubt, to those temperate and laborious habits of life, which probably they consider as anything but good gifts of fortune. To our superficial glance, at least, the peasantry of that happy island seemed amongst the most cheerful people we had yet met with. In the course of our evening rambles, we were often reminded, by the sound of a guitar in the cottages, of Peter Pindar's lines, describing Madeira, in which, amongst other graphic and characteristic details of the manners of these simple islanders, he tells us how generally they

> "Touch, when the labours of the day are done,
> The wire of music to the setting sun."

But I am forgetting our excursion. By dint of whip and spur, and, above all, the poles of the guides, we were not long in getting up the hill. These lads had learned by experience, as they declared, that the horses go up much easier, upon the whole, by forcing themselves forward at a quick pace, than when their rate of climbing is reduced to a walk. So they continued belabouring and scolding the wretched animals only the more vehemently the steeper the road became, and the more we begged, in the name of their cattle, for a little mercy.

At our first starting from the town, we found ourselves amongst the vineyards, spread out conspicuously on the face of the mountain, and fronting the meridian sun. Funchal is placed in the centre of an immense amphitheatre, open to the south, and backed on the north by ridges of volcanic origin, piled one above another, to the height of several thousand feet. The vineyards, in most instances, are inclosed and crossed by walls, on the top of which rest the ends of long poles, placed horizontally at the height of five or six feet from the ground, and supported at intervals by upright posts. These are crossed by rods, inserted at such distances from one another as to make an open roof of irregular basket or trellis-work, along which the vines, having crept up the vertical poles, spread themselves out in all direc-

tions, and, I think, with more freedom than is generally seen in other countries where the grape is cultivated. This canopy of leaves, creepers, and bunches of grapes, affords a most complete shade; or if it be pierced here and there by a chance ray of sunshine, this serves, by contrast, only to give more complete effect to the exclusion of the light, and glare, and heat in all other parts of the vineyard.

Before the sea-breeze sets in, which is commonly about ten in the morning, it must be owned that in these covered gardens the air is often sultry, and rather overloaded with the perfume of the fruit, which hangs in a degree of profusion worthy of one of the most favoured spots in the whole world. But when that greatest of all luxuries, the delicious sea-breeze, sweeps away from the land the noxious vapours of the night, and substitutes the cool, pure atmosphere of the ocean, I can conceive, for my part, no paradise more perfect than such a scene; nor, indeed, on such occasions, does one desire anything more. The thought of its transient nature, it is true, affects some self-tormenting minds, and mars a portion of their enjoyment. But a more extensive experience is sure to satisfy any one who views these things in their proper light, that in this very uncertainty as to the duration, and doubt as to the chances of the recurrence of such high feasts, consists essentially no inconsiderable portion of their exquisite relish.

For our parts, we had learned to make the most of everything. As we had already seen some snatches of the world, we knew how to profit by the hour as it rattled past, and also how to leave the future to take care of itself, when it should come up with us. Off we spanked, therefore, straight up the hill, keeping the convent right ahead, with the vines at some parts of the road, where it was narrowest, very nearly meeting over us, their branches being often so much loaded, that the wonder was, how they were not broken down. It was mortifying to be told that we were just one fortnight too soon; for not one ripe grape could we find, among the fifty-four different kinds which we were gravely assured by the guides grew on the island.

As we ascended the mountain, we gradually left the vineyards far behind us, and got into a region of more vigorous, and a more lofty description of foliage. I cannot say at what height the vines cease, and the Spanish chesnut and other forest-trees commence; but the transition is most agreeable and picturesque. The air likewise is cooler, and the views much more extensive. On entering the wood, we completely lost sight of the church, or convent, as we still called it, and indeed of the whole upper part of the island; but we were more than repaid by the occasional peeps through the openings of the town and harbour beneath us, and of the distant horizon, which appeared to be lifted up many degrees above the usual height; as if the sea, instead of being flat, had assumed the form of a huge bowl, in the centre of which lay the island. This curious deception augments in proportion as the eye is raised; and to persons who witness it for the first time, is extremely puzzling.

After proceeding for a considerable distance through the woods, we came to a showy iron railing and gateway, apparently the entrance to some wealthy magnifico's mansion; and as we were ripe for any sort of adventure, we dismounted and knocked at the gate, not in the least to the surprise of the guides, who were accustomed to all sorts of mad pranks in their English employers.

The porter, or major-domo, or whoever he was—at all events, a very dignified personage—soon made his appearance, and begged to know our pleasure. We explained, as well as we might, that our only desire was to look over grounds which appeared so beautifully laid out. Having ascertained this point, he moved off with a very stately air, and soon returned with Donna Isabella's compliments, and her permission for us to walk round her garden. The major-domo, however, before he trusted us alone, led us up to a rose-bush; and showing us the flowers, pointed to his eyes, with two of his fingers expanded like the branches of a double quizzing-glass, said in English, "Senhor, you look." After a pause, during which he supposed we might be digesting his first injunction, he added, "Senhor, you smell;" and as he was far from sure about the last expression, he suited the action to the word, by thrusting his deeply-bronzed nose right into the bush. All this was intelligible enough, and we were getting impatient to be off; but the imperturbable major-domo held us back, and with a most austere visage, intended to be particularly impressive, exclaimed, "Senhor, you no rompe!"—meaning, we supposed, "Pray, gentlemen, don't break any."

Everything was new to us; the fruits and flowers, the form of the walks, the architecture of the house, the language and dress of the people; and even a pretty little waterfall, tumbling over the black rocks into a basin, carved in the lava to receive it, appeared strange to our eyes, and had its peculiar interest accordingly. The branches of some of the finest trees were cut away, to admit light to the parterres; while a most unhappy sundial was so ingeniously placed as to enjoy the shade during the whole day. On stepping up to look at it, the word 'London,' engraved upon it, dispelled for an instant the Arabian-Night kind of air which was breathed over the whole of this fantastical but very pleasing spot.

What we lamented most was the absence of any opening by which we could obtain a glimpse of the bay, or of the town, or of the glorious display of vineyards which matted the whole face of the mountain below us. The sole object appeared to be, the exclusion of the glare and heat, at all hazards; at least it seemed a point of no importance with the proprietor to extend the view beyond the limits of the flower-garden and waterfall. From one part of the grounds, indeed, we saw, through an opening in the forest, to our great surprise, the church of our Lady of the Mountain towering above us. We had fancied ourselves still far from it, and were glad to hail it at the distance of only a few hundred yards.

The church is built of a dark-coloured blue lava, white-washed over: it contains a number of badly-painted pictures, but is, of course, well stocked with huge wax candles. In short, 'Nossa Senhora do Monte' is not so attractive when examined closely, as she is when viewed from a distance. Our attention, however, was more taken up with the view from the church, of all

the lower country, not only about the town and the bay, but far to the left, towards the promontory called the Brazen Head, and in the opposite direction towards a set of very high cliffs which stand boldly into the sea.

Whatever errors may have belonged to the Romish church, it can never be denied that its ministers had a strong perception of the sublime and the beautiful in scenery, and that the sites of their churches, convents, priories, and other places of residence, are generally such as the most chastised taste, even of our own more refined days, would not scruple to select. It is admitted, I believe, on all hands, that to the Roman Catholic priests of the Middle Ages we are indebted for the preservation of classical letters, which might otherwise have been swept entirely from the face of the earth by the deluge of barbarism which inundated Europe, when the great barrier of the Roman power was broken down. Neither is it improbable, that from the secretly cherished study of the ancient authors so preserved, these good fathers may have derived much of their feeling for the beauties of nature. The knowledge how to profit by their extensive opportunities would soon follow; and from their possessing the undisputed ascendancy in wealth, and in every other description of power, they would naturally take the lead in architectural ornament. The minds which could conceive such buildings as York Minster and Westminster Abbey, and find hands to execute them, with riches to endow them, would almost as a matter of course, understand the advantages of suitable situations for these and other great works of art.

It is always agreeable, when we can do so with fairness, not only to give the devil his due, but to give him a lift when he deserves praise. People, however, who have lived all their lives in Protestant countries, and flattered themselves with the idea of their being thoroughly unprejudiced, in their antipathy to the priests, can scarcely be made to listen with patience to anything which tells in their favour. And yet I have often visited countries where I have made acquaintance with many highly meritorious and conscientious ministers of the Roman Catholic religion. The happiness so generally diffused by these persons over their flocks was not only worthy of unqualified approbation, but might, perhaps, have set the example to places in which these ministers, merely from possessing an erroneous form of worship, are looked upon as little better than demons.

The commanding elevation we had now reached enabled us to inspect the structure of the different valleys intersecting the face of the mountain immediately above the town of Funchal. The channels of these streams were all dry, but they bore evident marks of the violence with which they had been scooped out.

I suspect, that no one who has not actually seen a mountain-torrent in full action can form a just conception of its power in transporting loose materials, or of the rapid manner in which it carves a bed for itself through very hard rocks. I had afterwards an opportunity of witnessing at Madeira one of the grandest specimens of these floods which is anywhere to be met with. The whole of the upper part of the mountain is split into crevices, in some instances deep enough to be called ravines, or, in the larger cases, even valleys. Many of these run into one another, so that, when the rain falls in any quantity, the whole series are set in operation at once, like so many gigantic sluices, to conduct the water into the main channels which convey it to the sea. In less precipitous countries, the minor streams take some time to collect their waters; but at Madeira, where the hills are steep, the whole is done almost at a blow, and with an impetuosity that looks quite formidable to strange eyes. A few hours only after a heavy rain has commenced, the torrents are all at work.

A valley of considerable dimensions indents the side of the mountain, at the foot of which stands the town of Funchal. Into this I do not know how many ravines empty their contents, certainly a considerable number, and some of them of great length, and reaching almost to the summit of the highest ridges of the island. At the point where this huge water-course approaches the town, which it divides into two parts, its channel is confined between walls of great strength, built in such a manner as to humour the natural tendency of the stream, and thus to lead so troublesome a visitor with all convenient speed into the ocean. If some precaution of this kind were not taken, the town would be liable to dangerous inundation. Even as it is, and with every kind of device to lead the water quickly off, Funchal is frequently all but submerged; and I remember hearing that in one season the bay of Funchal was strewed with pipes of 'London particular,' washed out of the cellars of the distracted merchants.

Things did not reach this pass, however, on the occasion I speak of, though it seemed, to an inexperienced eye, as if a few drops more would have made the flood break over its embankment, and, like one of those terrific crevasses in Louisiana, when the Mississippi bursts through the Levée, carry destruction to everything it encountered.

I do not recollect exactly the dimensions of the artificial channel along which the waters of this torrent are carried in safety through Funchal; but I should think it may be about eighty or a hundred feet wide, by twenty or thirty deep. This space was filled within a few feet of the top, partly with water and partly with stones, many of them of great magnitude, all moving together, with a noise like continuous loud thunder, and boiling and tearing along, over a much-inclined surface. I am afraid to guess what the angle might be which the bed of the stream made with the horizon; but it was sufficient to cover the surface with waves more tumultuous than I remember to have seen on any of the rapids in Canada. The water was flowing fast enough to bear along rocks with the utmost vivacity, which, I verily believe, the river St. Lawrence would not have been able to budge one inch. I saw stones, varying in size from that of a common chair to many times that magnitude, jerked half out of the stream by the prodigious violence with which they were dashed against one another, or perhaps against some opposing angle of the native rock, now undergoing a process of the most active discipline, in the way of grinding, that the bed of any current was ever exposed to. What may be the annual amount of wear and tear on these occasions I have no means

of judging ; but my first conception was, that, ere long, the torrent would hollow out such a channel for itself, that the worthy merchants of Funchal would no longer have occasion to dread the loss of their dear wine-pipes. But the plague is, that these formidable torrents choose, like the Mississippi when it breaks loose, to take the management of all such things into their own hands. Accordingly, it happens at Madeira as at New Orleans, and I suppose elsewhere, that nothing is more dangerous than attempting to alter essentially the direction of these currents. It is next to impossible, indeed, to predict what will happen in any given case when moving water is to be dealt with. It is true, that when man sets fairly about it, he may eventually beat even old Neptune himself—witness the breakwater at Plymouth, or the Eddystone light-house, which now completely defy the most violent winter gales. And yet we often see the best-constructed works, that skill and capital can put together to resist the ocean, 'melt into the yest of its waves,' like so many walls of sugar at the first touch of a summer gale !

At Madeira, when the rain ceases, the torrent quickly runs itself dry, after which we find the bed of the ravine paved along its whole length with blocks of stone, varying in dimensions according to the shape and inclination of the ground. On the occurrence of a comparatively flat spot, there is generally assembled a set of enormous boulders, which the torrent, though it has had power to force down the steepest places, has not been able to transport along the less inclined surface. Consequently we find a barrier, strictly resembling, in the principle of its formation, the bar which occurs at the mouth of a river. It is well known that water, moving at a given rate, will carry along materials of a certain weight and magnitude, and no larger or heavier ; but the instant this velocity is diminished, the heaviest materials cease to move ; or, in the language of the geologists, they are deposited. This holds good, whether the contact with the sea checks the stream, or the smaller inclination of the ground makes the torrent move slower, or that it has room to spread out.

Owing to these causes, the mountain-stream at Madeira is sometimes attended by evils of great magnitude, against which no skill has yet been able to contend successfully. These deposits of large stones across the direction of the torrent act as dams or weirs, by which the water is raised above the ordinary channel, and consequently, by overtopping the banks, it flows to the right and left, carrying devastation wherever it goes, sweeping out the warehouses, ripping up the pavements, and unfurnishing the dwellings of the inhabitants.

A succession of floods may deposit a succession of these great stones, without much mischief occurring ; till during some very rainy season a torrent of unusual magnitude descends the hill, charged, of course, with a fresh supply of materials. This new inundation sometimes drives the previous barrier fairly into the sea, and thus clears the channel. But, in accomplishing this arduous purpose, the waters are generally found to swell to such a monstrous height, that before its bed is opened, the stream has deluged the town, and the evil is done. In 1803 or 4, I forget which, I was told that an incident of this kind had occurred at Madeira. The accumulation of several years was swept completely through the town, carrying along with it a church, half a street of substantial houses, together with some of the inhabitants, and a countless number of pipes of wine, full into the sea. This formidable inundation, the work of a few minutes, was so unusually violent, that there was reason to believe a water-spout had broken over the island.

Upon the occasion when I witnessed one of these striking exhibitions of the power of moving water, though it was at a season of the year (April) when no great catastrophe was to be expected, the inhabitants of Funchal flocked in crowds to the edge of the flood, where they stood with looks of as much apparent wonder as if this had been the first time they had seen such a thing. Possibly, their familiarity with the effects of past torrents may have only increased their respect for those which succeeded ; so that what we looked upon merely with admiration may have seemed terrific in their eyes.

This is well known to be the effect of earthquakes upon the inhabitants of countries much exposed to their action. Strangers are interested, and even delighted, to feel a moderate shock or two ; but the natives invariably become more and more alarmed at each successive movement of the earth under their feet.

To us, this torrent was the grandest thing possible ; indeed, no imagination could have placed it before us. I remember that it required an effort of considerable resolution to advance to the brink and look over. The noise was such, that hardly any elevation of voice could make two persons audible to one another, though standing side by side. The ground shook, or rather trembled, violently, in a manner which indicated the enormous weight passing over the surface. I have seen no surf, or breakers, or rapids, in any part of the world, that impress the senses with so obvious a feeling of irresistible power as this prodigious mountain-torrent.

Old Niagara, indeed, is a sight a thousand times more magnificent and more beautiful ; but its perfect uniformity, the graceful majesty with which it curls over the precipice, and the grand dash with which it falls into the pool below, distinguish it altogether from the impetuous but transitory mountain-torrent at Madeira. Nevertheless, the two scenes are not bad pendants to one another ; and he who has seen only one of them must, I suspect, have an incomplete idea of what can be accomplished by moving water.

As we rode up the hill, we kept pretty nearly on the highest line, or back-bone of one of the ridges pointing towards the summit ; but on striking across, which we were obliged to do, in order to reach the country-house for which we were bound, another sort of tactic became necessary. We now coasted along, as it were, nearly at the same level, till we reached the bottom of the adjacent valley, then crossed the water-course, at this season generally quite dry, and again skirted along the bank till we gained the summit of the neighbouring ridge, having continued all the while nearly at the same horizontal

elevation. When these valleys assume the character of clefts or ravines, their passage is much more difficult, and sometimes even dangerous, at least in appearance. This arises from the narrow roads being bounded on one side by a precipice, and on the other by a bank almost perpendicular, so that any false step or alarm on the part of the horse, or rider, might prove fatal. The guides instructed us in this matter as well as they could; but not to much purpose, for we had got into high spirits, partly from the amusements of the day, and partly from a glass of an old Dominie's wine, whose house we had visited near the church. Having no longer the steep face of the mountain to climb, we resolved to give our attendants a race for it, and off we set along the narrow path just described at a round gallop.

The guides, however, unwilling to lose sight of us, clung lustily to the horses' tails, and loudly entreated us to go slower, as the road was dangerous, and near the bottom of the valley it became still more steep. We heard them, but we heeded not; or, at all events, the only notice we took of their supplications was to rap their knuckles with our sticks till they let go their hold, and then, being freed from all detention, we shot along at full speed, over ground totally unknown to us, except that a trip, or a slip, would have sent a couple of His Majesty's officers full fifty fathoms deep into some yawning ravine.

The danger was greatest just at the turn of the road, as it wound along the curve of the valley, before reaching the water-channel; at this spot its inclination was considerable, and its width not more than three feet. I was leading the way in this mad-cap scamper, followed by my companion, who was thundering along the path, pursued by the wretched Portuguese yelling and howling to us to stop. I was afraid lest, in his ardour, my friend might be impelled between me and the bank, so that I should be wedged off the road into the bottomless pit on the left. At this critical point in the race, what should heave in sight ahead but a young lady, walking slowly towards us? To pass her was impossible, to draw up equally so; and had she not been a person of considerable presence of mind, the whole party, in all probability, would have gone to pot together. She took her line with the decision of a veteran, familiar with danger, and confident in resources. By springing at once to the side, and grasping the roots of the trees with her hands, she was enabled to cling to the upright bank, for the instant of time it cost us to whiz past her. We grazed her drapery as a cannon-ball might have done; but the wind of the shot did her no harm, and the guides, brandishing their poles, and screaming with terror, on our account (and that of their ponies), likewise dashed by her with scarcely less impetuosity. We were all out of sight in a moment; and it was not till long afterwards, when I found myself in company with a lady who was relating a story which made the company stare, that I had an opportunity of apologising for the alarm to which we had exposed her.

By the time the guides came up, we had reached our friend's house, delivered over our horses to the groom, and were enjoying ourselves on the grassy knoll in front of the verandah, one of the prettiest spots, if not the very prettiest, in the world, and commanding a more varied and extensive view of the scenery of Madeira than any other we had yet beheld. From the house, which is placed on the top of the ridge, we could peer into both the valleys by which it was flanked, and, upon looking up, almost into the great Caldeira; or, if that were too high, we could see into several deep and barren ravines far above the reach of vegetation, the ground thereabouts being rugged and stern, in the highest degree savage and uninviting, and eminently picturesque. To those who delight in contrasts, nothing could be more interesting than the change of scene which a single turn of the head brought in sight. On looking downwards, towards the south, we could see before us all the riches of this rich island literally glowing at our feet. In the middle distance stood the town, fringing the bay, speckled over with boats and shipping; and beyond this gay and busy scene lay our old friend the sea, of which one never tires, with its horizon thirty or forty miles off. A panorama from this spot would tell famously, I think, in Leicester Square; but I fear no verbal description could more than revive, in the minds of those who have witnessed it, some traces of the splendid original, which, in its way, has few things that I know of to match it in any country. To some tastes, indeed, the tropical scenery is preferable, and mine is of that number; but beyond that luxurious zone, it would be difficult to name a spot superior to Madeira. And yet, in consequence of the discomforts of a ten days' voyage, how small are the numbers who ever see that splendid island! and of that number, how great a proportion are too much weighed down, either with sickness or with sorrow, to care about scenery or anything else! For instance, our poor passenger, whom we carried out in the Endymion, who, had she been in health, would have enjoyed this wonderful landscape more than most people, never even noticed it. She soon sank into the grave, without once lifting her head; and her afflicted companions in the voyage re-embarked, and hastened away from scenes too deeply associated in their minds with their recent loss to excite any feelings but those of sorrow.

I wish I had it in my power, before quitting this subject, to give some practical instructions likely to be useful to persons desirous of trying the climate of Madeira. I am told that there is at present good accommodation for invalids upon the island, who may either board, or take apartments. Rent and servants' wages are said to be low. A convenient house can be had for 200 dollars, or about £45 per annum. Some of the boarding-houses are maintained exclusively for the use of sick people, where every care is taken of them. There are frequent opportunities of going to Madeira, as the East or West India ships almost always call there. Any vessel touching at that island will be glad to carry passengers at from £20 to £25. Nobody would think of going in any of the small traders. The passage varies from ten days to three weeks from Portsmouth: perhaps a fortnight would be a fair average.

Lest anything I may have said, when recommending Madeira to invalids, should be misunder-

stood, I may remark, that it is in England, and England alone, that real comforts are known. Foreigners possess not the word, nor the idea, nor the thing. This should never be forgotten when sick persons are to be moved from home.

In the course of my inquiries, I was sorry to learn that the ancient manners of the island had lately suffered by those political shocks which have so dreadfully disturbed the relations of society elsewhere. A friend writes to me as follows :—

"I believe the hospitalities of Madeira are not quite so general as they used to be, as things are much changed for the worse. Revolution has reached even that once quiet and happy spot. 'The schoolmaster is abroad,' but his scholars are a sad, ignorant, intractable, conceited, and mischievous crew. They will require, I fear, much severe discipline to subdue them to decent behaviour, and to fit them (for they are very unfit at present) to receive any useful instruction."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE CHASE.

When the Dey of Algiers, in full divan, was once rather sharply taken to task by the captain of an English man-of-war, on the score of sundry piracies committed by the cruisers of his Highness, it is recorded that the Chief in reply merely held up his hands, and, placing his two thumbs perpendicularly side by side, looked significantly to the interpreter, gave an enormous angry puff from his pipe, and broke up the conference.

It required no small share of diplomatic address to read this riddle to the indignant captain, and something like force to prevent his returning to the palace, to take the circumcised villain by the throat, when it was explained to him that the Turk's meaning was to institute a comparison between one of his own rovers and one of His Britannic Majesty's ships, the resemblance being correctly typified, as the Dey chose to insinuate, by the similarity of his two thumbs.

There may be some use, however, in considering what points of resemblance there really are between a mere piratical corsair and a regularly commissioned man-of-war. The same great poet has celebrated both ; but as he drew his conceptions of a pirate's life from the red-hot furnace of his own fancy, it necessarily partakes of the warmth and brilliancy of its volcanic origin. On the other hand, when speaking of the Royal Navy, he was tied down to formal realities ; and never having had any opportunity of seeing the poetical parts of our profession, he naturally constructed his verse to suit his limited acquaintance with the subject. Take the lines beginning

> "White is the glassy deck, without a stain,
> Where on the watch the staid lieutenant walks :
> Look on that part which sacred doth remain
> For the lone chieftain, who majestic stalks,
> Silent and fear'd by all . . . .*"—

and it is clear that a stranger to the sea could no more infer from them the true character of a naval officer, or come to any just conception of his duties, than he could estimate his character from seeing a suit of uniform made for him by Mr. Willis of St. James's Street. But mark what an immediate difference there is in the strain when the bard comes to sing of downright pirates, or such as his fancy chooses to create. So enchanting, indeed, is the magic of his miraculous verse, that we can scarcely make an effort to resist its conclusions, but yield up our judgment to the imagination of the writer, and allow ourselves to suppose, that in the following lines we have a correct representation of a gang of nautical highwaymen :

> "O'er the glad waters of the dark-blue sea,
> Our thoughts as boundless, and our souls as free,
> Far as the breeze can bear, the billows foam,
> Survey our empire, and behold our home !
> These are our realms, no limits to their sway—
> Our flag the sceptre all who meet obey—
> Ours the wild life in tumults still to range,
> From toil to rest, and joy in every change†."

But these pictures, one of a naval life, the other of a pirate's, though both are beautiful, are both nearly equally imperfect. At all events, they certainly convey totally incorrect impressions of the two kinds of life respectively. It would be a needless task, I presume, to show that regular pirates in the Mediterranean, as well as elsewhere, bucaniers on the Spanish main, or mainotes in the Archipelago, are, in fact, about as miserable and unpoetical a set of scoundrels as ever cut defenceless people's throats, or squabbled amongst themselves for the booty.

The truth is, that the world does not furnish, in the whole round of its joyous excitements, a more animating scene than is to be found on board one of His Majesty's frigates on a cruise, in the height of the war. It has all the vigorous occupation, the glowing spirit of enterprise, and all the brilliant hopes of the freest piratical life, without the guilt and the fears of that calling. It is mere nonsense to say that a sense of crime augments the pleasures of such a life ; for there is not a tittle of sound evidence to prove that there can ever be any satisfactory or permanent enjoyment which has not duty for its object or its source, and true principle for its guide.

I should be happy indeed, could I describe, in suitable terms, the delightful sort of life we led in the Endymion, during the two or three years which followed our abortive attempts to drive the French out of the Peninsula by means of two or three thousand unarmed Gallician peasants. During the remaining months of 1809, all 1810, and for the greater part of 1811, we had almost as free a roving commission as any corsair could have drawn up for himself. At one time, we bore down to the very edge of the trade-winds, in latitude 30° ; at another stretched far to the north, in parallel of 60°, within a day and a half's sail of Iceland. Sometimes we entered the Straits, to fill up our water-casks at Gibraltar ; then stood off to Madeira, to replenish our stores of generous wine ; or we touched at St. Michael's, to revel in its beautiful orange-groves, and pluck ripe fruit from the very trees ; or we made a trip to Lisbon, to hear the fresh tidings of such battles as Tala-

* Childe Harold, Canto II. Stanza xix.

† The Corsair, § i.

vera ; or we turned homewards, landed at Cork or at Plymouth, and enjoyed a nearer and dearer hospitality. It often fell in our way to visit these places, and a great many others, in the ordinary course of regular duty ; while the intervals were filled up with the more arduous occupations of cruising after the scattered ships of the enemy, or protecting immense convoys of our own merchant vessels.

A more delightful species of voyaging and travelling than was afforded by these random calls at the ports of different countries cannot well be imagined. We never stayed long enough at any place to become tired ourselves, nor, we trusted, to tire others. We skimmed the cream of everything—got rapidly acquainted with the best people at every new place—saw the most interesting objects on half the shores of Europe—indulged in the first luxuries of every season—and then dashed away, either to some new anchorage, or to roam at large amongst the islands of the Atlantic in search of anything that might turn up in the way of an enemy, armed or unarmed—a foe to grapple with, or a prize to profit by ; while our thoughts and feelings were alternately occupied by dreams of promotion, or disturbed by the smiles and other blandishments of the goddesses, 'black, brown, and fair,' of our well-peopled Pantheon.

It so chanced, however, that in all this busy period of the most active possible cruising, flirting, and feasting, there did not occur a single adventure deserving of that name, or such as would figure in a novel. We often got scent of French frigates, but never ran one of them home ; and although we used to frighten the lady abbess of many a convent with threats of abductions, we never carried our rope-ladders further than the most orthodox priests would have sanctioned. Neither, with all our opportunities, and apparently with the choice of our own cruising ground, did we ever pounce on a prize worth the trouble of catching ; or, to speak more correctly, did we ever catch one, in which the chase was not by far the most interesting part of the adventure.

On the 8th of November, 1810, when we were lying in that splendid harbour the Cove of Cork, and quietly refitting our ship, an order came for us to proceed to sea instantly, on a cruise of a week off Cape Clear, in quest of an enemy's vessel, reported to have been seen from some of the signal towers on the west coast. We were in such a predicament, that it was impossible to start before the next morning, though we worked all night. Off we went at last ; but it was not till the 11th that we reached our appointed station. Towards evening it fell dead calm, at which time there were two strange sails in sight ; one of them a ship, which we 'calculated' was an American, from the whiteness of his sails—the other a very suspicious, roguish-looking brig ; but as both of them were hull down, much of this was guess-work.

As the night fell, a light breeze sprang up, and we made all sail in the direction of the brig, though she was no longer visible. In the course of the middle watch, we fortunately got sight of her with our night glasses, and by two in the morning were near enough to give her a shot. The brig was then standing on a wind ; while we were coming down upon her, right before it, or nearly so. The sound of our bow-chaser could scarcely have reached the vessel it was fired at, before her helm was up ; and the next instant her booms were rigged out, and her studding-sails, low and aloft, seen dangling at the yard-arms. The most crack ship in His Majesty's service, with everything prepared, could hardly have made sail more smartly.

For our parts, we could set nothing more, having already spread every stitch of canvas ; but the yards were trimmed afresh, the tacks hauled closer out, and the haulyards sweated up till the yards actually pressed against the sheeve holes. The best helmsman on board was placed at the wheel ; and the foot of the foresail being drawn slightly up by the bunt slab-line, he could just see the chase clear of the fore-mast, and so keep her very nearly right ahead. The two forecastle guns, long 9-pounders, were now brought to bear on the brig ; but as we made quite sure of catching her, and did not wish needlessly to injure our prize, or to hurt her people, orders were given to fire at the sails, which, expanded as they now were before us, like the tail of a peacock in his fullest pride, offered a mark which could not well be missed. Nevertheless, the little fellow would not heave to, for all we could do with our forecastle guns. At four o'clock, therefore, we managed to get one of the long 18-pounders on the main-deck to bear upon him from the bridle-port. Still, we could not stop him, though it was now bright moonlight, and there was no longer any tenderness about hurting his people, or injuring his hull. The vessel, however, at which we were peppering away with round and grape-shot, as hard as we could discharge them from three good smart guns, was so low in the water, that she offered, when seen end on, scarcely any mark. How it happened that none of her yards or masts came rattling down, and that none of her sails flew away under the influence of our fire, was quite inexplicable.

The water still continued quite smooth, though the breeze had freshened, till we went along at the rate of six or seven knots. When the privateer got the wind, which we had brought up with us, she almost kept her own, and it became evident that she was one of that light and airy description of vessels which have generally an advantage over larger ships when there is but little wind. We, therefore, observed, with much anxiety, that about half-past four, the breeze began gradually, to die away, after which the chase rather gained than lost distance. Of course, the guns were now plied with double care, and our best marksmen were straining their eyes, and exerting their utmost skill, confident of hitting her, but all apparently to no purpose. One or two of the officers, in particular, who piqued themselves on knowing how to level a gun on principles quite unerring, in vain tried their infallible rules to bring our persevering chase to acknowledge himself caught.

By this time, of course, every man and boy in the ship was on deck, whether it was his watch or not ; even the marine officer, the purser, and the doctor, left their beds, a rare phenomenon. Every one was giving his opinion to his neighbour ; some said the shot went over her, some that they fell short ; and the opinion that she was a witch, or the Flying Dutchman, or some other phantom, was current amongst the sailors ; whilst the

marines were clicking their flints, and preparing to give our little gentleman a taste of the small-arms when within their reach.

While things were in this anxious but very pleasurable state, our foresail flapped slowly against the mast, a sure indication that the breeze was lulling. The quadruple rows of reef points were next heard to rattle along the topsails, sounds too well known to every ear as symptoms of an approaching calm. The studding-sails were still full, and so were the royals; but, by-and-by, even their light canvas refused to belly out, so faint was the air which still carried us, but very gently, along the water, on the surface of which not a ripple was now to be seen in any direction. As the ship, however, still answered her helm, we kept the guns to bear on the chase without intermission, and with this degree of effect, that all her sails, both low and aloft, were soon completely riddled, and some of them were seen hanging in such absolute rags, that the slightest puff of wind must have blown them away like so many cobwebs. By five o'clock it was almost entirely calm; and we had the mortification to observe, that the chase, whose perseverance had kept him thus long out of our clutches, was putting in practice a manœuvre we could not imitate. He thrust out his sweeps, as they are called, huge oars requiring five or six men to each. These, when properly handled, by a sufficiently numerous crew, in a small light vessel, give her the heels of a large ship, when so nearly calm as it now was with us. We were not going more than a knot through the water, if so much, which was barely enough to give us steerage way.

The Frenchman got out, I suppose, about fifteen or twenty of these sweeps; and so vigorously were they plied, that we could see by the moonlight, and still more distinctly when the dawn appeared, that the foam was made to fly in sheets at each stroke of these gigantic oars, which were worked together, by their looms being united by a hawser stretching fore and aft. Our chief anxiety now was to pitch a shot amongst his sweeps, as one successful hit there would have sent half his crew spinning about the decks. But we were not so fortunate; and in less than an hour he was out of shot, walking off from us in a style which it was impossible not to admire, though our disappointment and vexation were excessive. By mid-day he was at least ten miles ahead of us; and at two o'clock we could just see his upper sails above the horizon. We had observed, during the morning, that our indefatigable little chase, as soon as he had rowed himself from under the relentless fire of our guns, was busily employed in bending a new suit of sails, fishing his splintered yards, shifting his top-gallant masts, and rigging out fresh studding-sail booms—all wounded, more or less, by our shot. As the severe labour of the sweeps was never intermitted, we knew to a certainty that the chase, though small, must be full of hands, and consequently it was an object of great importance for us to catch him. Of this, however, there now seemed but very little chance; and many were the hearty maledictions he received, though shared, it is true, by our own crack marksmen, now quite crest-fallen, or driven to the poor excuse of declaring that the *moonlight* on the water had deceived them as to the distance.

It really seemed as if every one on board had been seized with a fever; nothing else was thought of but the French brig; every glass, great and small, was in requisition, from the pocket spy-glass of the youngest midshipman, to the forty-inch focus of the captain. Each telescope in its turn was hoisted to the cross-trees, and pointed with a sort of sickening eagerness towards the lessening speck on the distant horizon. One might also have thought that the ship was planted in a grove of trees, in the height of spring time, so numerous were the whistlers. This practice of whistling for a wind is one of our nautical superstitions, which, however groundless and absurd, fastens insensibly on the strongest-minded sailors at such times. Indeed, I have seen many an anxious officer's mouth take the piping form, and have even heard some sounds escape from lips which would have vehemently disclaimed all belief in the efficacy of such incantation.

But it would be about as wise a project to reason with the gales themselves, as to attempt convincing Jack that as the wind bloweth only when and where it listeth, his invoking it can be of no sort of use one way or the other. He will still whistle on, I have no doubt, in all time to come, when he wants a breeze, in spite of the march of intellect; for, as long as the elements remain the same, a sailor's life, manage it as we will, cannot be materially altered. It must always be made up of alternate severe labour and complete indolence—of the highest imaginable excitement, and of the most perfect lassitude. If I were not anxious at this moment to get back to my chase, I think I could show how these causes, acting upon such strange stuff as sailors are made of, leads to the formation of those superstitious habits by which they have always been characterised.

In the course of the afternoon, we perceived from the mast-head, far astern, a dark line along the horizon, which some of our most experienced hands pronounced the first trace of a breeze coming up. In the course of half-an-hour, this line had widened so much that it could easily be perceived from the deck. Upon seeing this, the whistlers redoubled their efforts; and whether, as they pretended, it was owing to their interest with the clerk of the weather office, or whether the wind, if left alone, would have come just as soon, I do not venture to pronounce; but certain it is, that, *long* before sunset, our hearts were rejoiced by the sight of those numerous flying patches of wind, scattered over the calm surface of the sea, and called by seamen cats-paws; I presume from the stealthy, timorous manner in which they seem to touch the water, and straightway vanish again. By-and-by, the true wind, the ripple from which had marked the horizon astern of us, and broken the face of the mirror shining brightly everywhere else, indicated its approach, by fanning out the skysails and other flying kites, generally supposed to be superfluous, but which, upon such occasions as this, do good service, by catching the first breath of air, that seems always to float far above the water. One by one the sails were filled; and as the ship gathered way, every person marked the glistening eye of the helmsman, when he felt the spokes of the wheel pressing against his hand, by the action of the water on the rudder. The fire-engine had been carried into the tops, and where

its long spouts could not reach, buckets of water were drawn up and thrown on the sails, so that every pore was filled, and the full effect of the wind was exerted on the canvas.

The ship now began to speak, as it is termed; and on looking over the gangway we could see a line of small hissing bubbles, not yet deserving the name of spray, but quite enough to prove to us that the breeze was beginning to tell. It was near the middle of November, but the day was as hot as if it had been summer; and the wind, now freshening at every second, blew coolly and gratefully upon us, giving assurance that we should have no more calms to trouble us, whatever might be our other difficulties in catching Monsieur Frenchman.

Of these difficulties, the greatest by far was that of keeping sight of the brig after it became dark. We overhauled him, however, so fast, that we had great hopes of getting near enough to be able to command him with the night-glasses, in which case we made pretty sure of our prize. The night-glass, it may be right to explain, is a telescope of small power, increasing the diameter of objects only about eight times. It has a large field-glass; and, in order to save the interception of light, has one lens fewer than usual, which omission has the effect of inverting the object looked at. But this, though inconvenient, is of little consequence in cases where the desideratum is merely to get sight of a vessel, without seeking to make out the details.

Meanwhile, as we spanked along, rapidly accelerating our pace, and rejoicing in the cracking of the ropes, and the bending of the lightest and loftiest spars, that butterfly sort of gear which a very little wind soon brushes away, we had the malicious satisfaction of observing that the poor little privateer had not yet got a mouthful of the charming wind, which, like the well-known intoxicating gas, was by this time setting us all a-skipping about the decks. The greater part of the visible ocean was now under the influence of the new-born breeze; but in the spot where the brig lay, there occurred a belt or splash of clear white light, within which the calm still lingered, with the privateer sparkling in its centre. Just as the sun went down, however, this spot was likewise melted into the rest, and the brig, like a poor hare roused from her seat, sprang off again. We were soon near enough to see her sweeps rigged in, to the delight, no doubt, of her weary crew, whose apprehensions of an English prison had probably kept up their strength to a pitch rarely equalled.

As the twilight, the brief twilight of winter, galloped away, a hundred pairs of eyes were almost jumping out of their sockets in their attempts to pierce the night; while those who had glasses kept scrubbing them without mercy, as if they imagined more light would be let into the tube the more they injured the lenses. One person, and only one, continued, as he asserted, to see the chase, faintly strung, like a bead, on the horizon. I need not say that this sharp-sighted gentleman was nailed to his post, and ordered on no account to move his head, fatigue or no fatigue. There happened to be a single star, directly over the spot to which this fortunate youth was directing his view, with as much anxiety as ever Galileo peered into the heavens in search of a new planet. This fact being announced, a dozen spy-glasses were seen wagging up and down between this directing star and that part of the horizon, now almost invisible, which lay immediately below it. Many were the doubts expressed of the correctness of the first observation, and many the tormenting questions put to the observer as to which way the brig was standing? what sail she had set? whether we were drawing up with her or not? as if the poor youngster had been placed alongside of the vessel. These doubts and fears were put an end to, or nearly so, by bidding the boy keep his eye fixed on what he took to be the chase, and then, without acquainting him with the change, altering the ship's course for half-a-minute. This experiment had scarcely been commenced before he cried out, "I have lost sight of her this very moment! I saw her but an instant ago!" And when the ship's head was brought back to the original course, he exclaimed, "There she is again, by jingo! just to the right of the star."

This star served another useful purpose at the same time. The man at the wheel could see it shining between the leech of the fore-topsail and that of the topmast studding-sail, and was thus enabled to steer the ship with much greater steadiness than he could possibly have done by the compass alone. Before midnight, as the breeze had freshened greatly, and we were going at the rate of nine knots an hour, we had drawn up so much with the privateer that every one could see her with the naked eye; and the gunner with his mates, and the marksmen who had lost their credit on the preceding night, were fidgeting and fussing about the guns, eager to be banging away again at the prize, as they now began, rather prematurely, to call her, little knowing what a dexterous, persevering, and gallant little fellow they had to deal with, and how much trouble he was yet to give us.

It was not till about two o'clock that we once more came within good shot of him; and as it had been alleged that the guns were fired too quickly the night before, and without sufficient care in pointing, the utmost attention was now paid to laying them properly; and the lanyard of the trigger never pulled, till the person looking along the gun felt confident of his aim. The brig, however, appeared to possess the same witch-like, invulnerable quality as ever; for we could neither strike her hull, so as to force her to cry peccavi, nor bring down a yard, nor lop off a mast or a boom. It was really a curious spectacle to see a little bit of a thing skimming away before the wind, with such a huge monster as the Endymion tearing and plunging after her, like a voracious dolphin leaping from sea to sea in pursuit of a flying fish.

In time this must have ended in the destruction of the brig; for as we gained upon her rapidly, some of our shot must by-and-by have taken effect, and sent her to the bottom. She was destined, however, to enjoy a little longer existence. The proper plan, perhaps, would have been to stand on, firing at her sails, till we had reached within musket shot, and then to have knocked down the helmsman, and every one else on her deck. This, however, was not our captain's plan, or probably he became impatient; at all events he gave orders for the whole starboard broadside to be got ready;

and then, giving the ship a yaw, poured the whole discharge, as he thought, right into his wretched victim!

Not a mortal on board the frigate expected ever to look on the poor brig again. What, then, was our surprise, when the smoke blew swiftly past, to see the intrepid little cocky gliding away more merrily than before. As far as good discipline would allow, there was a general murmur of applause at the Frenchman's gallantry. In the next instant, however, this sound was converted into hearty laughter over the frigate's decks, when, in answer to our thundering broadside, a single small gun, a six-pounder, was fired from the brig's stern, as if in contempt of his formidable antagonist's prowess.

Instead of gaining by our manœuvre, we had lost a good deal; and in two ways. In the first place, by yawing out of our course, we enabled the privateer to gain several hundred yards upon us; and secondly, his funny little shot, which had excited so much mirth, passed through the lee foretop-sail yard-arm about six feet inside the boom iron. Had it struck on the windward side, where the yard was cracking and straining at a most furious rate, the greater part of the sails on the fore-mast might have been taken in quicker than we could have wished, for we were now going at the rate of eleven and a half, with the wind on the quarter.

Just as we made out where his first shot had struck us, another cut through the weather main-top-gallant sheet; and so he went on, firing away briskly, till most of our lofty sails were fluttering with the holes made in them. His own sails, I need scarcely add, were by this time so completely torn up by our shot, that we could see the sky through them all; but still he refused to heave to, and, by constantly firing his single stern-chaser, was evidently resolved to lose no possible chance of escape. Had one or two of his shot struck either of our top-masts, I really believe he might have got off. It therefore became absolutely necessary that we should either demolish or capture him without further loss of time. The choice was left to himself, as will be seen. But such a spirited cruiser as this was an enemy worth subduing at any cost; for there was no calculating the mischief a privateer so admirably commanded might have wrought in a convoy. There was a degree of discretion, also, about this expert privateer's-man, which was very remarkable, and deserving of such favour at our hands as we had to spare. He took care to direct his stern-chaser so high, that there was little chance of his shot striking any of our people. Indeed, he evidently aimed solely at crippling the masts, knowing right well that it would answer none of his ends to kill or wound any number of his enemy's crew, while it might irritate their captain to show him less mercy at the last moment, which, as will be seen, was fast approaching.

The breeze had now freshened nearly to a gale of wind, and when the log was hove, out of curiosity, just after the broadside I have described, we were going nearly twelve knots (or between thirteen and fourteen miles an hour), foaming and splashing along. The distance between us and the brig was now rapidly decreasing, for most of his sails were in shreds, and we determined to bring him, as we said, to his senses at last. The guns were re-loaded, and orders given to depress them as much as possible, that is, to point their muzzles downwards, but not a shot was to be fired till the frigate came actually alongside of the chase. Such was the poor privateer's sentence of death; severe indeed, but quite necessary, for he appeared resolved never to yield.

On we flew, right down upon our prey, like the enormous roc bird of the Arabian Nights. We had ceased firing our bow-chasers, that the smoke might not stand between us and the lesson we meant to read to our resolute pupil, so that there was 'silence deep as death' along our decks, and doubtless on his; for he likewise had intermitted his firing, and seemed prepared to meet his fate, and go to the bottom like a man. It was possible, also, we thought, that he might only be watching, even in his last extremity, to take advantage of any negligence on our part, which should allow him to haul suddenly across our bows, and, by getting on a wind, have a chance of escaping. This chance, it is true, was very small; for not one of his sails was in a condition to stand such a breeze as was now blowing, unless when running nearly before it. But we had seen enough, during the two days we had been together, to apprehend that his activity was at least a match for ours; and as he had already shown that he did not care a fig for shot, he might bend new sails as fast as we could.

At all events, we were resolved to make him surrender, or run him down: such was our duty, and that the Frenchman knew right well. He waited, however, until our flying jib-boom end was almost over his taffrail; and that the narrow space between us was filled with a confused, boiling heap of foam, partly caused by his bows, and partly by ours. Then, and not till then, when he must have seen into our ports, and along the decks, which were lighted up fore-and-aft, he first gave signal of surrender.

The manner in which this was done by the captain of the privateer was as spirited and characteristic as any part of his previous conduct. The night was very dark; but the ships were so near to one another, that we could distinguish the tall figure of a man mount the weather main-rigging of the brig, where he stood erect, with a lantern in his hand, held out at right angles from his body. Had this light not been seen, or its purpose not understood, or had it been delayed for twenty seconds longer, the frigate must, almost in spite of herself, have gone right over him, and the salvo of a double-shotted broadside would have done the last and fitting honours over the Frenchman's grave.

Even as it was, it cost us some trouble to avoid running him down; for, although the helm was put over immediately, our lee quarter, as the ship flew up in the wind, almost grazed his weather gangway. In passing, we ordered him to bring-to likewise. This he did as soon as we gave him room; though we were still close enough to see the effect of such a manœuvre at such a moment. Every stitch of sail he had set was blown, in one moment, clean out of the bolt-ropes. His haul-yards, tacks, and sheets, had been all racked aloft, so that everything not made of canvas remained

in its place; the yards at the mast-heads, and the booms rigged out; while the empty leech and foot-ropes hung down in festoons, where, but a minute before, the tattered sails had been spread.

We fared, comparatively speaking, not much better; for although, the instant the course was altered, the order was given to let fly the topsail-haulyards, and every other necessary rope; and although the downhaul-tackles, clewlines, and bunt-lines, were all ready manned, in expectation of this evolution, we succeeded with great difficulty in saving the fore or main-topsails; but the top-gallant-sails were blown to pieces. All the flying kites went off in a crack, whisking far away to leeward, like dried forest-leaves in autumn.

It may be supposed that the chase was now completely over, and that we had nothing further to do than take possession of our prize. Not at all! It was found next to impossible to board the brig, or, at least, it seemed so dangerous, that our captain was unwilling to hazard a boat and crew till daylight came. The privateer, having no sail set to keep her steady, became so unmanageable, that the sea made a clean breach over all, rendering it out of the question to board her on the weather side. Nor was she more easily approachable to leeward, where a tangled net-work of broken spars, half-torn sails, shattered booms, and smacking ropes'-ends, formed such a line of 'chevaux de frise' from the cathead to the counter, that all attempts to get near her on that side were useless.

The gale increased before morning to such a pitch, that as there was still a doubt if any boat could live, the intention of boarding our prize was of course further delayed. But we took care to keep close to her, a little to windward, in order to watch her proceedings as narrowly as possible. It did not escape our notice, in the mean time, that our friend (he was no longer our foe, though not yet our prisoner) went on quietly, even in the height of the gale, shifting his wounded yards, reeving new ropes, and bending fresh sails. This caused us to redouble our vigilance during the morning; and the event showed that we had good need for such watchfulness. About three o'clock in the afternoon, the brig having fallen a little to leeward, and a furious squall of wind and rain coming on at the same moment, she suddenly bore up, and set off once more, right before the wind. At the height of the squall we totally lost sight of our prize; and such a hubbub I hardly recollect to have heard in my life before.

"Where is she? Who was looking out? Where did you see her last?" and a hundred similar questions, reproaches, scolds, and the whole of the ugly family of oaths, were poured out in abundance; some on the privateer, whose adroitness had thus overreached our vigilance; some upon those who, by their neglect, had given him the opportunity; and many imprecations were uttered merely to express the depth of anger and disappointment at this stupid loss of a good thing, which had cost so much trouble to catch. All this passed over in the first burst; sail was made at once; the topsails, close reefed, were sheeted home like lightning, and off we dashed into the thick of the squall, in search of our lost treasure. At each mast-head and at every yard-arm there was planted a look-out man, while the forecastle hammock-netting was filled with volunteer spy-glasses. For about a quarter of an hour a dead silence reigned over the whole ship, during which anxious interval every eye was strained to the utmost; for no one knew exactly where to look. There was, indeed, no certainty of our not actually running past the privateer; and it would not have surprised us much, when the squall cleared up, had we seen him a mile or two to windward, far beyond our reach. These fears were put an end to by the sharp-eyed captain of the fore-top, who had perched himself on the jib-boom end, calling out with a voice of the greatest glee,

"There he goes! there he goes! right ahead! under his topsails and foresail!"

And, sure enough, there we saw him, springing along from wave to wave, with his masts bending forward like reeds, under the pressure of sail enough to have laid him on his beam-ends had he broached-to. In such tempestuous weather a small vessel has no chance whatever with a frigate; indeed, we could observe, that when the little brig fell between two high seas, her foresail flapped to the mast, fairly becalmed by the wave behind her.

In a very few minutes we were again alongside, and, doubtless, the Frenchman thought we were at last going to execute summary vengeance upon him for his treachery, as we called it. Nothing daunted, however, by the style in which we bore down upon him, the gallant commander of this pretty little eggshell of a vessel placed himself on the weather-quarter, and with a speaking trumpet in his hand, indicated by gesticulations a wish to be heard. This could not well be refused; and we steered as close as we could pass along without bringing the two vessels in contact, or risking the entanglement of the yards, when we rolled towards one another.

"I have been compelled to bear up," he called out in French, "otherwise the brig must have gone to the bottom. The sea broke over us in such a way that I have been obliged, as you may perceive, to throw all my guns, boats, and spars overboard. We have now several feet water in the hold, in consequence of your shot, which, you may likewise observe, have nearly destroyed our upper works. If, therefore, you oblige me to heave to, I cannot keep the vessel afloat one hour in such weather."

"Will you make no farther attempt to escape?" asked the captain of the Endymion.

"As yet I have made none," he replied firmly; "I struck to you already; I am your prize; and, feeling as a man of honour, I do not consider myself at liberty to escape, even if I had the power. I bore up when the squall came on, as a matter of necessity. If you will allow me to run before the wind along with you, till the weather moderates, you may take possession of the brig when you please; if not, I must go to the bottom."

Such was the substance of a conversation, very difficult to keep up across the tempest, which was now whistling at a great rate. To have brought the ships again to the wind after what had been said, would have been to imitate the celebrated 'Noyades,' of Nantes; for the privateer must have been swamped instantly. Therefore, although we grievously distrusted our companion, we sailed

along most lovingly together, as if we had been the best possible friends, for about sixty or seventy miles. During the greater part of this interval the frigate had scarcely any sail set at all; and we sometimes expected to see our little friend pop fairly under the water, and so elude us by foundering, or escape by witchcraft; by the protection of which, in the opinion of the Johnnies, he had been so long kept from us.

At eight o'clock in the evening it began to moderate, and by midnight we succeeded in getting a boat on board of the prize, after a run of between three and four hundred miles. Such is the scale of nautical sport! And where, I now beg to ask, is the fox-hunting, or the piracy, or anything else, more exciting than this noble game?

The brig proved to be the Milan privateer, from St. Malo, of 14 guns, and 80 men, many of whom were unfortunately wounded by our shot, and several killed. She had been at sea eighteen days, but had made no captures. The guns, as I have already mentioned, had been thrown overboard to lighten her. In the morning we stopped the leaks, exchanged the prisoners for a prize crew, and put our heads towards the Cove of Cork again, chuckling at our own success in having nabbed the very vessel we were sent after. But this part of the exploit, it seemed, we had no title to claim merit for, since the Milan had not seen the land, nor been within many miles of it. This was a trifle, however; and we returned right merrily to tell our long story of the three days' chase.

The captain's name was Lepelletier—I have pleasure in recording it—M. Pierre Lepelletier, of St. Malo; and wherever he goes, I will venture to say he can meet no braver or more resolute man than himself.

Long before he came on board he had well earned the respect of his captors, high and low; and his manners and information, after we became personally acquainted with him, raised him *still* more in general estimation.

One day, when I was walking with him under the half deck, I overheard two of the sailmakers, who were mending the holes his shot had made in our fore-topsail, conversing about the chase, the prize, and the prisoners; the only topics which occupied our thoughts for a week afterwards. One of them laid down his palm and needle, and looking very significantly to our side of the deck, exclaimed,

"I say, Bill, is it not a pity that the French captain there, is not an Englishman?"

I lost no time in translating this observation to the person whom it most concerned, who declared it was by far the highest compliment he had been honoured with since he came on board the Endymion.

I happened many years afterwards to relate the details of this chase and capture to the late Sir Thomas Hardy, one of the ablest and most experienced officers in the Navy, whose comment upon the story it may be useful to give in his own words.

"This Frenchman's conduct," said he, "may teach us the important lesson, that an officer should never surrender his ship, whatever be the force opposed to him, while there remains the slightest possible chance of escape. The privateer you speak of had very nearly slipped through your hands; and had he knocked away one of your sticks probably would have done so. It is always useful to have good practical examples of what perseverance and well-directed zeal may accomplish, especially with very small means. I think I have known more than one ship captured, which might perhaps have baffled their enemy, had they been as stoutly defended as your little privateer. Don't let us forget her example; for it is no matter whence instruction comes—from friend or from foe—provided it be good."

END OF THE FIRST SERIES OF FRAGMENTS.

FRAGMENTS

OF

VOYAGES AND TRAVELS.

SECOND SERIES.

PREFACE.

In the First Series of these Fragments I addressed myself chiefly to young persons; and, in like manner, my principal object in this continuation is to engage the attention of those who, from having entered the service in less stirring times than I passed through, may perhaps have found it more difficult to gain experience for themselves.

I have likewise ventured to introduce some odds and ends of technical information which seemed calculated to interest or to amuse other people not directly connected with the sea.

London, March 1832.

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FRAGMENTS

OF

VOYAGES AND TRAVELS.

CHAPTER I.

TAKING A LINE IN THE SERVICE.

THAT there is a tide in the affairs of men, has very naturally become a figure of frequent and almost hackneyed use in the cockpits, gun-rooms, and even the captains' cabins of His Majesty's ships and vessels of war. Like its numerous brethren of common-places, it will be found, perhaps, but of small application to the real business of life; though it answers capitally to wind up a regular grumble at the unexpected success of some junior messmate possessed of higher interest or abilities, and helps to contrast the growler's own hard fate with the good luck of those about him.

Still, the metaphor may have its grateful uses; for certainly in the Navy, and I suppose elsewhere, there is a period in the early stages of every man's professional life at which it is necessary that he should, more or less decidedly, 'take his line,' in order best to profit by the tide when the flood begins to make. It is surely as valuable a secret in the conduct of life as in the practice of navigation, to discover the exact moment for tripping the anchor and sheeting home the topsails; and although sea moralists will differ on the one point, as sea pilots differ on the other, all must agree that there is much advantage in knowing distinctly beforehand what we intend to aim at, not only in the first start, but during the subsequent conduct of the voyage. It is not enough to have the wind and tide in our favour; we must also possess the art of availing ourselves of them: lest by going too fast when the breeze is favourable, we take the ground upon some of those numerous sunken shoals which even our good fortune itself so often scatters in our course. How frequently, for example, at daybreak, after a night of the fairest possible wind, at the very height of the spring tides, may we not see, along the banks of some mighty stream—the sacred Ganges, or the silver Thames—a fringe of richly-freighted argosies, all stranded, not for want of able mariners, or experienced pilots, but from too intemperate and heedless a use of the advantages within their reach, and from the consequent absence of that vigilance and energy which, had the gale and stream been adverse, they must have been stimulated to exercise in order to advance at all.

It is difficult, I confess, to translate these ancient saws and metaphors into practice, or to say exactly at what stage of a young officer's career the determination to adopt any one of the numerous lines before him should be taken: but there can be little doubt as to the utility of that determination being made early in life. In most cases, it is clearly beyond the reach of artificial systems of discipline, to place, on a pair of young shoulders, the reflecting head-piece of age and experience; neither, perhaps, would such an incongruity be desirable. But it seems quite within the compass of a conscientious and diligent commanding officer's power (and surely it forms an important part of his duty), by every means to cultivate the taste, and strengthen the principles and the understanding of the persons committed, for a season, to his charge. His constant endeavour should be, to train the thoughts of those young men who have not yet learned to reason entirely for themselves, in such a manner that, when the time for independent reflection and action arrives, their judgment and feelings may be ready to carry them forward in the right path. It will, in most cases, be too much to expect that the benefit of such instruction shall be distinctly perceived by the objects of all this solicitude; but there can be nothing unreasonable in supposing that such training may often contribute to assist their abstract virtuous intentions. It may teach them the habit, for instance, of discovering that, in practice, there is a positive, and generally a speedy pleasure and reward attendant on almost every exercise of self-denial. When that point is once firmly established in the mind of a young man, it becomes less difficult to persuade him to relinquish at all times, and pretty much as a matter of course, whatever is merely agreeable to him at the moment, if it stand in the way of the stern claims of more laborious duty.

Although the period must vary a good deal, I should be disposed to say, that, in general, a year or two after an officer is promoted to the rank of lieutenant, may be about the time when he ought

fairly and finally to brace himself up to follow a particular line, and resolve, ever afterwards, manfully to persevere in it. His abilities and industry will thus have the best chance for effect, in consequence of being concentrated on some definite set of objects; and his friends, both on shore and afloat, will be furnished with some tangible means of judging of his capacity. Without such knowledge, their patronage is likely to do themselves no credit, and their protégé very little, if any, real service.

Some young fellows set out in their professional life by making themselves, as they suppose, thorough-bred sailors, merely by aping the broadest external features in the character of the foremast men. These 'kiddy blades,' or 'tarpaulin men,' as they are called in the cockpit slang, have their hands constantly in the tar-bucket; their fingers are cut across with the marks of the ropes they have been pulling and hauling; and their whole soul is wrapped up in the intricate science of cutting out sails, and of rigging the masts and yards. Their dreams are of cringles and reef-tackles, of knots, splices, grummets, and dead-eyes. They can tell the length, to a fathom, of every rope in the boatswain's warrant, from the flying jib downhaul to the spanker-sheet; and the height of every spar, from the main-top-gallant truck to the heel of the lower mast. Their delight is in stowing the hold; dragging about kentlage is their joy; and to form a good bend in the cable-tier, without calling for a standfast at the capstan, is their great pride*. In harbour they are eternally paddling in the boats, rowing, or sculling, or sailing about; they are always the first in fishing or bathing parties; in short, they are for ever at some sailor-kind of work. At sea, their darling music is the loud whistle of the hardest stormstay-sail breeze, with an occasional accompaniment of a split main-top-sail. 'The harder it blows, and the faster she goes,' the merrier are they; 'strong gales and squally' is the item they love best to chalk on the log board; and even when the oldest top-men begin to hesitate about lying out on the yard to gather in the flapping remnants of the torn canvas, these gallant youngsters glory in the opportunity of setting an example of what a gentleman sailor can perform. So at it they go, utterly reckless of consequences; and by sliding down the lift, or scrambling out, monkey fashion, to the yard-arm, where (at the risk of their lives) they sit laughing, though the spar be more than half sprung through, they accomplish their purpose of shaming the others into greater exertions. It is well known that one of the ablest, if not the very ablest, of the distinguished men whom the penetrating sagacity of Nelson discovered and brought forward, owed his first introduction to the notice of that wonderful commander by an exploit of this very description.

These are the dashing boys who cut out privateers, jump overboard after men who cannot swim, and who, when the ship is on fire, care not a farthing for the smoke and heat, but dive below with the engine-pipe in their hands, and either do good service, or perish in the flames with a jolly huzza on their lips. Such may fairly be called the muscular parts of our body nautical, for there is no gummy flesh about them; and when handled with skill, they form stout instruments which help essentially to win such battles as the Nile and Trafalgar. They constitute a very curious and important class between the high-caste officer in talents and education, and the mere jack tar, who is, and ought to be, pretty nearly a machine.

The young persons I have just been describing are, however, by no means servile imitators of the sailors; they possess much useful technical knowledge, as well as mere energy of character, and often both think and act with originality; yet they are docile to the last degree, and delight in nothing more than fulfilling, to the very letter, the orders of their superiors. They amuse themselves, as I have mentioned before, by affecting the gait, the dress, and the lingo of the men before the mast; and are at times supposed to be a little too familiar with these models, on whom they pretend to shape their manners; but still they never carry the joke so far as to become what is called 'Jack and Tom,' even with the leading men in the ship. They can sing, upon occasion, snatches of forecastle ditties, or fling off a hornpipe worthy of the merriest cracked fiddle that ever sounded under the bow of a drunken musician amongst a company of well-painted doxies, half-seas over, at the back of Point Beach. Not content with wearing, according to the directions in the song,

"Their long-quartered shoes, check shirt, and blue jacket,"

they will even thrust into their cheek a quid of tobacco (though detesting it from their souls), merely to gain the credit, such as it is, of 'chewing backy like a sailor.'

Of course, there must be a limit in age and in rank to the indulgence of these fancies; and if even an elder midshipman or a mate of the decks were permanently to distinguish himself after this masquerade fashion, he would speedily lose the personal respect of the crew towards himself, besides forfeiting much of the consequence which it is his duty to keep up for the station, and, of course, weakening one of the most efficient sinews of discipline.

It becomes, then, absolutely necessary that, sooner or later, these youths should make up their minds either to reform their habits altogether, or hit upon such a modification of them as shall be consistent with their new station, and suitable to the more extended views which their elevation commands. When a mid, for example, is promoted to lieutenant, he must speedily decide whether he shall follow up in earnest a course of strictly seaman-like objects, of which the mere outward show had previously captivated his young fancy; or he must enter into some compromise with himself, and relinquish a part of his exclusive regard for these pursuits, in consideration of others less fascinating, to be sure, but more likely to bear on his advancement; for, without some knowledge of many other things, his chance must be very small in the race of professional life.

In tolerably wide opposition of habits to these

* P. S., 1840.—It is curious to observe how rapidly all things change! This allusion will now scarcely be intelligible, even to professional men,—so completely has the use of iron cables superseded that of hempen ones!

tarpaulin men follow the less dashing and showy race sometimes called 'star-gazers,' sometimes 'dictionary men,' who are also occasionally taunted or dignified by their messmates with the title of 'philosophers.' The happiness of this class lies in the nautical, scientific, diplomatic, and literary departments of our multifarious profession, even the ordinary duties of which branches afford a wide and diversified field for exertion, and furnish occupation for an immense number of very differently-constructed heads and hands. The theory of navigation—including the serene delights of practical astronomy—the mathematical principles of seamanship, ship-building, and gunnery—together with the complicated and difficult art of surveying coasts, form the chief objects which engage their attention. The knotty topic of discipline, too, perhaps among the most difficult of sciences, by furnishing occupation for many of these persons who are as yet incompetent to grapple with it, gives birth to an infinite deal of nonsense. The object of most of these young philosophisers is to get at the reason of all things, and to be able not only to work by the rules laid down for them in printed books, or in the written orders of their superiors, but to investigate the foundation of these rules and regulations so thoroughly, that when new cases occur they may have it in their power to meet them by fresh resources of their own.

Unquestionably all this is very useful; but it may be overdone; and very often it is so. Yet there is no denying that the mere circumstance of understanding the rationale even of the most ordinary subjects, has a wholesome influence on the mind, provided too much time be not expended upon its abstract investigation. Compared with the inert kind of mole-like blindness which characterises the operations of those who work by 'rule of thumb,' in total theoretical ignorance of what they are about, this sort of knowledge has a decided advantage in practice. In the naval profession, at least, there may always be observed a wonderful difference between the manner in which two persons of equal abilities execute the same task, when one of them sees his way clearly by the light of science, and is trained in the habit of thinking for himself, while the other proceeds under the guidance of downright experience alone, with no lights but such as are reflected from the facts embraced by his own limited knowledge. It is only when the two go together that the highest services are performed. True science, it may be remarked, consists of the condensed experience of ages of observation 'curdled into one hour.' But, unless there exist a certain degree of personal familiarity with the subject, the application to practice can rarely be made with safety. The profoundest mathematician—the La Place or Herschel of the day—would probably find their integral calculus avail them little in taking a common lunar at sea in roughish weather; but, on the other hand, without that mighty calculus, the expertest manipulations of practical men would go for nothing. The great high-priests of science, indeed, are not slow to acknowledge, in their turn, the obligations which they lie under to those industrious but unlearned observers who scatter themselves over the surface of the globe, and, armed with the borrowed results of the mathematician's knowledge, search far and wide for new co-efficients or elements upon which still more extensive generalisations may, in due time and in far different hands, be made to rest. What, for example, would the sublime theory of the tides be worth, if deprived of the data furnished by mere sailors? Even those wonderful and refined speculations relating to the velocity of light and the production of colours by the interference of the different rays, have derived one of their most popular illustrations from a purely nautical observation of the ebb and flow of the sea at Batsham in Tonquin.

In the multitude of occupations to which naval men are daily called, and the still greater variety to which they may probably be called, it is utterly impossible they can give adequate attention to each, so as to acquire anything approaching to profound knowledge respecting more than a very few topics. Still, there can be no doubt that the habit above alluded to, of investigating everything, more or less deeply, for one's self, and familiarising the young mind to the prompt creation of resources, and their immediate application to practice, cannot fail to render an officer more useful as a public servant than if he contented himself with acquiring a bare knowledge of the rules alone. On the other hand, as most young men are but too ready to think for themselves, and to despise all authority, it requires some care to prevent their running rather too fast. Fortunately, however, there is a very important, and, it may be called, in certain respects, a peculiar feature in the naval profession, which generally acts as a salutary check on this inherent presumption of our nature. Theory and practice with us always go hand in hand—we are never off duty—we are constantly engaged in real work—a routine of actual business must be gone through—but as this routine is for ever liable to be interfered with by the diversified nature of the elements with which we have to contend, our hands and heads are so invariably and so completely filled with real occupation, that we have very little time for idle speculation. It requires merely a proper share of attention on the part of the commanding officer, at the fitting moment, to give a right impulse to these inquiries. Since, however, the true charm of mixing up theoretical speculations with actual practice can be well understood only when the two go together, we must watch for the occurrence of those moments when the young men have themselves just discovered their want of knowledge, and are smarting under the humiliating penalties of ignorance. Then, and perhaps only then, if we can 'catch them on the wheel,' as sportsmen say, will they be truly grateful to us for our communications.

It takes nothing from the value of this course of mixed practice and theoretical investigation, to show these students that they are still very far—even hopelessly far—from the highest walks of scientific knowledge, and that every fresh step they gain will only contribute to extend the horizon of their ignorance. On the contrary, this very conviction, arrived at in a legitimate way, does great good, by teaching young men to distrust themselves and their own unaided resources, without in the least degree weakening their reliance on those faculties of their own minds which they

have actually put to the test and not found wanting. If, in short, they be men of the true stamp, and a laudable ambition excites them to persevere, they will soon come to possess an immense mass of scientific and professional information, highly delightful to themselves, and eventually useful to their country. But as they cannot by possibility find time to study thoroughly one hundredth part of these things, they must be content to acquire the power of using the greater portion of all such knowledge by proxy, as it were, in right of a well-grounded faith in those high and constituted authorities by whom the whole has been rigorously investigated and established, and by whom the results have been fitted for common use ; or, to adopt the impertinent phrase of the school-books, are reduced to the meanest capacity.

Out of the class of officers now alluded to, the growth of which it has been the wise policy of late years to encourage, there have sprung up the numberless voyagers, surveyors, and other strictly nautical men, who are always to be found when the public service requires a practical question to be settled, or a professional office of responsibility and trust to be filled up. If the arctic circle is to be investigated by sea or by land, or the deserts of Africa traversed, or the world circumnavigated afresh, under the guidance of the modern improvements in navigation, the government at once calls upon such men as Parry, Franklin, Clapperton, Beechey, to whom they can safely entrust the task, with the certainty of its being as completely executed as the nature of things will admit of. Again : if a person who unites first-rate scientific attainments with extensive experience be required to arrange and methodise, and so turn to practical account, for the general benefit of the country, the result of these and ten hundred other similar though less brilliant services, in past and present years, the Admiralty, without seeking beyond the profession, lay their hands at once upon a competent hydrographer, and through the skill and diligence of such an authority as Beaufort, insure not only the fidelity of their numerous charts and other nautical works (now placed at the free disposal of the public), but also give the country an assurance that those officers who are employed afloat in extending and in perfecting our knowledge of almost every part of the navigable world, are judiciously distributed*.

From the same class, also, a valuable race of naval statesmen have been drawn. For a considerable number of years, the whole of the diplomatic duties of South America, as far as concerned the interests of England, were carried on by the naval commanders-in-chief. Who can forget how important a share of Lord Nelson's command, or, after him, of Lord Collingwood's in the Mediterranean, consisted of duties of a purely civil description? And it may be questioned if diplomatic history offers a more masterly specimen of address and statesman-like decision, as well as forethought, than was displayed by Captain Maitland, in securing the person of Buonaparte, not only without committing himself or his government, but without wounding the feelings of the fallen warrior. The case was, and ever must remain, unique ; and yet the most deliberate reflection, even after the event, has not suggested anything to wish changed. Fortunate, indeed, was it for the reputation of this country that the delicate task fell to the lot of an officer possessed of such inherent vigour of character, and one so familiar with the practical exercise of his own resources, that difficulties which might have staggered ordinary minds vanished before his.

In so extensive a service as the Navy, accident might perhaps occasionally produce such men as have been named above ; but it is very material to observe, that unless there existed, as a permanent body, a large class in the Navy, who follow the pursuits alluded to from taste as well as from motives of public spirit, and from whose ranks selections can be made with confidence at moments of need, such opportunities as those above alluded to might often be allowed to pass unprofitably. It is, moreover, important to recollect, that it is in these matters as in everything else where there is a great demand, and consequently a great supply, there will from time to time start up a master spirit, such as that of my lamented friend, the late Captain Henry Foster, to claim, even in the very outset of his career, the cheerful homage of all the rest. So far from the profession envying his early success, or being disturbed at his pre-eminent renown, they felt that such well-earned honours only shed lustre on themselves.

It is also very pleasing to observe the reciprocal feeling which belongs on such occasions to all rightly constituted minds. When Captain Foster, in 1828, then only lieutenant, received the Copley medal, the highest scientific honour in the gift of the Royal Society, it never occurred to him merely to hang it at his breast in solitary dignity, or to chuckle presumptuously at his own particular good fortune. So far from this, he thought only of the service ; and proceeding straight to the Admiralty, he showed the medal, and declared modestly, but firmly, to their lordships, that he considered the honour only nominally bestowed upon himself, but essentially conferred upon the naval profession at large. This generous and manly appeal could not fail to make its due impression ; and within the same hour, his commission, as commander, was signed, his appointment to a ship ordered, and a voyage of scientific research carved out for him. But I need not add how bitter a grief it is to those who were personally acquainted with this rising young officer, to think that so much knowledge—such useful talents—such unmatched zeal and industry—and such true love for science—all so fertile in pro-

* "*Admiralty Office*, 15*th Feb.* 1830.

"The Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, being desirous to extend the benefit of the marine surveys which have been made for the use of His Majesty's Navy, more generally among the mercantile shipping of the empire, have appointed Mr. R. B. Bate, 21, Poultry, London, to be their lordships' agent for the sale of all Charts, Plans, Views, and Sailing Directions, which are published under their lordships' orders; and he has been directed to employ proper sub-agents at the principal sea-ports for the same purpose.

"All corrections, arising from surveys in progress, will be notified to the agent for immediate insertion ; so that the Charts and Directions in his hands will always contain the most recent and authentic information.

"Catalogues may be had at the agent's, stating the prices which have been authorised by their lordships.

"J. W. Croker."

mises of future service and renown—should have been lamentably quenched in a moment.

Besides the regular-built sailors, and these salt-water statesmen and philosophers, there is yet another set which greatly outnumbers both, and which, if comparisons must be made, equals, if it does not far exceed them in utility. I allude to that large and very important body of strictly professional persons who are not remarkable for anything in particular, unless it be for a hearty and uncompromising devotion to the service. These hardy public servants work on from day to day, doing their duty steadily and well, and labouring with more or less efficiency in proportion to their several capacities, and with despondency or cheerfulness according to their respective temperaments, and the circumstances in which they happen to be placed. Yet, captains, it is to be feared, are generally too apt to consider these meritorious persons as less entitled to attention than their more showy companions; just as schoolmasters are, not unnaturally, disposed to devote most of their time to the cleverest boys, to the comparative neglect of those who cluster round the point of mediocrity. It may, however, be easily conceived that the persons least attended to, afloat as well as on shore, often stand more in need of notice and assistance than their gifted brethren, who are better able to make their own consequence felt and acknowledged. For it must not be forgotten, that these honest, hard-working men actually perform the greater part of all the routine drudgery of the service, and, what is more, they perhaps execute it, upon the whole, better than men of higher talents could do in their places. At all events, although they perform everything required of them, they gain no distinction, and it is obvious that they never can gain any. Their very numbers, and the common-place, every-day nature of their duties, render distinction out of the question. This is not their fault; neither, in strictness, can it be called their misfortune; it is their inevitable fate, which it is no more possible to alter than to add one cubit to their stature.

On the other hand, they themselves may do well to recollect, that distinction is not necessarily happiness. Beauty in a woman, and talents in a man, often prove deeper sources of evil than attend mediocrity in either of these gifts. Nor does observation teach us to suppose that there is less contentment amongst this class of officers, than may be found amongst those whose knowledge and powers prompt them to aspire to rivalry with the grand leaders of the profession.

Commanding officers should always bear in mind, that these praiseworthy individuals, though remarkable for nothing, and sufficiently aware of their unpretending and humble place in the scale of public estimation, are not the less sensible that, so long as they do their duty, they are entitled to a proper share of favour; and they will seldom continue to work well if this scanty and hard-earned meed be withheld. It should also be remembered, that while these persons occupy the trying and delicate situation of men who are conscious that the rest of the world cannot afford time to consider their feelings or their interests, they are not on that account less alive to kindness and fair dealing than those whose career has been more brilliant. Every commanding officer may therefore be said to hold in his hands the ready means of securing the good-will of a large majority of those by whom he is surrounded; for, at the cost of little or no sacrifice on his own part, he can command the strenuous support of those people whose exertions it is the chief end of his discipline to concentrate and direct to one common purpose.

The class amongst us who devote themselves to sober literary pursuits is necessarily very small; but that of the happy youths, who dream the gods have made them poetical, has many members, who 'rave, recite, and madden round the ship,' to their own (exclusive) satisfaction. Others there are who deal desperately in the fine arts of painting and music,—that is, who draw out of perspective, and play out of tune. Their poor messmates can answer for little respecting these future Rembrandts and Paganinis, except that they certainly hide not their lights under a bushel; and that the happiness of the mess would be considerably improved if authority were given to pitch every sketch-book and every flute out at the stern-port—followed, of course, by their owners!

Finally come the raking, good-looking, shore-going, company-hunting, gallivanting, riff-raff set of reckless youths, who, having got rid of the entanglement of parents and guardians, and having no great entanglement of principle or any thing else to check them, seem to hold that His Majesty's service is merely a convenience for their especial use, and His Majesty's ships a sort of packet-boats to carry their elegant persons from port to port, in search of fresh conquests, and, as they suppose, fresh laurels to their country.

Few men, it must be remembered, do any thing well which they do not themselves sincerely like; and, for the same reason, if an officer be capable of performing services really valuable, his success must arise from turning his chief attention to those branches of the profession which he feels are the most congenial to his peculiar taste, and which experience has shown lie within the range of his capacity. Some officers not only reason about this matter, but deliberately act upon it, while the greater number, as may be supposed, adopt their line unconsciously. Still, it is the bounden duty of every well-wisher to the service to use the influence he possesses (and there are very few indeed who do not possess some share of influence, direct or indirect,) to lead the young persons about him to follow the true bent of their genius, and to select as a principal object of study the particular branch of the profession in which they are most likely to benefit themselves permanently, because that must always prove the very same thing as benefiting their country.

I well remember, in my own case, the day, and almost the very hour, when these convictions flashed upon my mind. I then saw, for the first time, that unless I speedily roused myself, and 'took my line' vigorously, the proper occasion might swiftly pass away. I was quite astonished how, up to that moment, I had seen so little of what now appeared so very palpable; every other consideration was instantly dismissed, and all minor vanities being shaken like dew-drops to the air, I set resolutely about the attainment of my promotion, the grand object of every officer's ambition. But before describing how this important affair was put in train, I shall attempt a

sketch of the kind of life I was leading about this period. In looking back to those days, and glancing the mind's eye along the intermediate years, I sometimes ask myself whether or not I should act very differently if permitted to make the voyage over again, under the guidance of experience bought by the practice of life. The retrospect, of course, offers some unavailing regrets; but still I can hardly believe that the result would, on the whole, have proved materially happier for myself.

Such being the case, I trust there is no unpardonable egotism in mentioning, in a work intended for young people, that one of my chief motives for bringing these Fragments of my life and adventures before them, is the hope of imparting to others, similarly circumstanced, a portion of that spirit of cheerfulness, and that resolute determination to make the most of things, which, after thirty years of activity and enjoyment in foreign climes, have landed me in perfect contentment at home.

CHAPTER II.

A SAILOR ON SHORE.

It is a far easier thing to get into a house in Ireland than to get out of it again; for there is an attractive and retentive witchery about the hospitality of the natives which has no match, as far as I have seen, any where else in the wide world. In other places the people are hospitable or kind to a stranger, as the case may be, or as the guest seems to want assistance: but in Ireland the affair is reduced to a sort of science, and a web of attentions is flung round the visitor before he well knows where he is. So that if he be not a very cold-blooded, or a very clear-sighted, or a very temperate man, it will cost him sundry headaches—and mayhap some touches of the heartache—before he wins his way back again to his wonted tranquillity.

I had not a single acquaintance in Ireland when first I visited that most interesting of countries, of which few people in England know much, even though their imaginations have been so powerfully aided by the delicious pencil of Miss Edgeworth. Before leaving it, however, after about a year and a half's cruising off and on their coasts, I was on pretty intimate terms, with one family at least for every dozen miles, from Downpatrick on the east, to the Bloody Foreland on the west, a range of more than a hundred and twenty miles.

The way in which this was brought about is sufficiently characteristic of the country. I had inherited a taste for geology; and as the north of Ireland affords a fine field for the exercise of the hammer, I soon made myself acquainted with the Giant's Causeway, and the other wonders of that singular district. While engaged in these pursuits, I fell in with an eminent medical practitioner resident in that part of the country, a gentleman well known to the scientific world as one of the best-informed geologists and most accomplished philosophers of the day. What was more to my present purpose, he was still better known on the spot as the most benevolent and kindest of men. In no part of the globe have I made a more agreeable or useful acquaintance. During a residence of a week under the roof of this delightful person, I observed that he frequently changed the conversation from literary, professional, or scientific topics, to urge me to make acquaintance with some friends of his, living also in the north of Ireland, but at the opposite angle. He was, in particular, desirous that I should see a family with whom he described himself as being very intimate, and who were then on a visit far in the west. I was nothing loath, as may be supposed; indeed, a young lieutenant is seldom burdened with many misgivings as to his reception any where (except within the precincts of the awful Admiralty!); and I, naturally, felt a vehement curiosity to see something more of the manners and customs of a country, of whose public proceedings, it is to be regretted, the world knows so much more than of their domestic life.

Besides these motives, I was influenced by the extreme earnestness of my worthy friend, who, indeed, would hardly let me stir from his house until I had promised to deliver, with my own hands, a letter of introduction to a lady residing in the part of the country above alluded to, and who, he assured me, would not only be most happy to see me herself, but also to introduce me to the family with whom she was then living as a guest. I thought it rather an odd arrangement, that a mere guest should introduce a stranger to another person's house: but I had already seen enough of the hearty hospitality of Ireland not to wonder at any thing having a kind purpose in view. I therefore promised that, if at any time I could obtain leave of absence for a few days, the introductory letter should be delivered.

I did not discover, until long afterwards, the secret motive of my friend's anxiety that I should pay the visit in question, though, at the time alluded to, I was quite coxcomb enough to suppose that it all arose from personal considerations. It mattered little to me, however, to what the kindness was due; and, my leave having expired, I set off to my ship, the Endymion, of which I was then second lieutenant, with a firm resolution to avail myself of the first opportunity of visiting the persons to whom my excellent friend the doctor had given me an introduction. I had been so frequently absent before, that I expected to be fixed on board for a long time to come, and was therefore agreeably disappointed to discover that my brother-officers had formed so many pleasant acquaintances at Burncrana, a town on the banks of the magnificent Lough Swilly, that they were quite willing to remain on the spot, and to take upon their shoulders the extra duty which my renewed absence imposed upon them. I had only, therefore, to obtain the captain's permission for a fresh run. This was easily gained, for he was the most indulgent of mortals; and his only caution was, "Now, mind, don't you be falling in love with any of these Irish girls. It will be quite time *enough* for that when you are a post captain."

I promised to attend to his advice; and set out on this new, but rather wild expedition in the highest glee, wishing for no better sport than to try the firmness of my resolutions on this head, though, it must be confessed, I was fully more inclined to follow the precept enjoined upon me by another friend, who, as if to better the captain's instruction, said,

"Do take care of what you are about, when you mix with those fair and fascinating witches the Irish ladies, and never hold yourself as heart-safe, unless you are in love with at least two of them at once!"

Off I went; but it is needless to state whether the course steered was to the east or to the west after leaving Londonderry, the chief city in that part of Ireland. Indeed, for my own part, I was almost indifferent in what direction the road lay; for the whole scene was so new and so full of interest and variety, and I had already met with so much attention in the country, that I felt a sort of certainty of finding much amusement and a welcome reception wherever I went. Meanwhile, the circumstance of having a letter of introduction in my pocket naturally determined my route; and having hired a good stout horse, I strapped my valise behind, and set out on a fine summer's evening as deliberately in quest of adventures as any knight-errant that ever put lance in rest. Yet I was in no respect prepared to find myself so soon in what appeared very like a field of battle. I had not proceeded twenty miles before I came to a village surrounded by troops, and guarded at the ends of its few streets by cannon, which appeared to be loaded, as lighted matches were smoking by their sides. A considerable encampment was formed on a slightly rising eminence near the village; and on the neighbouring ground, still farther off, might be seen large irregular groups of people, who, I learned, upon inquiry, were chiefly Orangemen, preparing for a grand ceremonial procession on the 1st July old style, or the 12th of July according to the present reckoning, the well-known anniversary of the battle of the Boyne. In order to resist this proceeding on the part of the Protestants, an immense multitude of the opposite, or Roman Catholic side of the question, were likewise assembled in this unquiet spot, and all the roads converging towards that quarter were lined with parties of men carrying sticks in their hands, flocking to the scene of expected action. The military had been called in to keep the peace; but the angry passions of the respective factions were so much roused, that even the precautions above described seemed hardly sufficient to prevent the threatened conflict.

The sight was painful in the highest degree; and I could not but recollect with what different sensations I had viewed the chivalry of France and England, drawn up in hostile array on the heights of Corunna. There the contest was between two different nations, one fighting against, and the other in defence of, the liberties of the country in which they were engaged. But here the combatants were brethren in blood, kindred in spirit, and all possessed, as they believed, with a common object, the good of their native country! As a matter of curiosity, and of the most stirring kind of interest, I could have no great objection to seeing another such battle as that which I had witnessed near Corunna between those long established fighting-cocks, the French and English; but to look on while honest Pat and Tim were breaking one another's heads upon abstract political grounds, and English soldiery interposing with grape-shot and fixed bayonets to make them friends again, was what I had no mind for. I therefore tried to extricate myself forthwith from this unhappy struggle; but my horse being tired could not proceed; so I was forced to sleep in a village which, for aught I knew, might be sacked and burned before morning.

Nothing occurred, however, to disturb the peace; but I felt far from easy till out of reach of this furious excitement; yet, strange to say, some quiet folks, a few miles distant, with whom I took breakfast, seemed scarcely to care or to know that the country round them was all on fire. From thence the course lay across a wild range of mountains, the names of which there was no one left to tell; but geographers may recognise their position by the circumstance of one of them having on its top a sheet of fresh water called Loch Salt. Nothing can be conceived more desolate or dreary than this part of the country; and as there were few inhabitants upon it at any time, and none at all at this moment, I had no small difficulty in making good my way. Neither was the prospect of the place I was bound to much more agreeable. "There can be little or no comfort," thought I, "in a region so sterile: whatever art might attempt to counteract such desolation, must be unavailing."

But on coming nearer to the noble bay or lough, on the banks of which the country-seat of my unknown friends was to be found, the aspect of things changed so suddenly, that if it had been done by magic it could scarcely have been rendered more surprising. A slight inequality in the ground served to conceal this 'jewel in the desert,' as it was often called, till the whole of its rare beauties could be seen to the greatest advantage. Even without such a contrast as the wild moors afforded, the singular merits of this spot must have claimed the admiration of any one caring a straw for fine scenery; but after such a preparative they appeared doubly grateful to the senses; and I put spurs to my horse, anxious to come nearer to such a delicious scene.

The mansion of my future friend, of which only partial glimpses could be caught now and then, was well guarded on every side by fine old trees, rising from the surface of carefully dressed grounds, richly stocked flower-gardens, long and wide avenues, and graceful terraces, some of which reached to the very water's edge, along a delicate beach on which the ripple scarcely broke. This charming domain occupied a narrow spit of land, or promontory, jutting forwards into a landlocked bay, or arm of the sea, in which the water appeared to lie always asleep, and as smooth as if, instead of being a mere branch uniting with the stormy Atlantic, it had been some artificial lake, contrived by the tasteful hand of a good fairy, the touch of whose wand it might be thought had likewise embellished the shore, to keep every thing in character. Nothing, indeed, which the most fertile imagination could suggest seemed to be wanting.

There was one extremely well-conceived device at this delightful spot, which I never remember to have seen any where else, though there must often occur in other places similar situations in which it might be imitated. Not far from the house, but quite hid under a thickly-wooded cliff, overhanging a quiet bight or cove, about ten or fifteen yards across, lay a perfectly secluded pool, with a bottom of snow-white sand. It was deep in the middle, but shelved gradually to its margin, which rested

on a narrow strip, or beach, of small round polished pebbles. This fringe, encircling the cove, was surmounted by a dry grassy bank, or natural terrace, reaching to the foot of the rock, the face of which was not merely perpendicular, but so much inclined, that the top more than plumbed the edge of the basin. Along the sky line, there was drawn a fence or veil of briars, honeysuckles, and other impervious bushes, interspersed with myrtles, wild roses, and foxglove, so thickly woven together, that all external view of this beau ideal of a bath was rendered impossible. The only access was by a narrow, steep, and winding path; and at the upper end was placed a high, locked gate, the key of which was in the exclusive charge of the ladies. I need say no more of the uses of this most enchanting of earthly grottoes, than that, if Diana and her nymphs had been as well provided, the catastrophe of Actæon could never have occurred.

Meanwhile, as I rode on, ignorant as yet of these and many other rich and rare beauties of this singular spot, and only admiring the general aspect of things, I began, for the first time, to reflect on the extreme awkwardness of my situation. I had no personal acquaintance with any one of the large party here assembled; nor was there the least reason for supposing that any one of them had ever heard of the intruder, or that, when told who and what he was, they would be a whit more inclined to notice him.

Said I to myself, "I am merely the bearer of an introductory letter to a lady, who is herself no more than a guest in the house; and although it might have been allowable enough to have called to deliver such an introduction, had business or accident brought me to the neighbourhood, or even within a short ride, yet it does seem rather a strong measure to travel fifty or sixty miles across a wild and disturbed country merely to pay a morning call."

The provoking inference, therefore, that my intention was to make a visit of some duration, became inevitable; and I pictured to myself the excessive annoyance of having a string of explanations to give respecting my movements, which, after all, might not be followed by any invitation to remain. After cogitating for a long time, I resolved to steal up to the house, if possible, unperceived; to have my horse turned over to the groom, and my portmanteau stowed out of sight, and then to walk boldly up to the door, with a visiting-card in one hand, and my credentials in the other, to be delivered to the servant for the lady to whom the letter was addressed. I next proposed to stroll about the woods, to give time for any good things said of the bearer in the introduction to work their way. I hoped, by this rather clumsy manœuvre, that by the time I returned to the house its inmates might be prepared to receive the stranger; and then, if their invitation to remain should happen not to be very pressing, I might pretend to be collecting specimens for my geological friends, and so make my escape; though, to own the truth, nothing was farther from my thoughts than geology, or any other scientific object.

In spite of these ingenious plans, I felt rather absurdly situated, and half wished I had not engaged at all in such an unpromising adventure. It seemed, however, too late to retract, and therefore I jogged on, as earnestly hoping not to be detected as ever did any troops in advancing to the attack of a besieged fort.

What, then, was my speechless horror, on riding up the approach, to discover a cavalcade of not fewer than a dozen ladies and gentlemen bearing right down upon me from the house. Had it been a troop of French cuirassiers charging across the ground, and threatening annihilation to the unfortunate hack and his rider, I could not have been much more astounded. It was natural to suppose that, as the master of the house was probably of the number, he would stop to inquire the business of the suspicious-looking stranger invading his territories. This I could but ill explain; as the person for whom I brought a letter being an elderly lady, was not likely to be on horseback amidst a party of young folks. I foresaw, at all events, that there would be a general halt ordered; while the poor new-comer, with his draggled horse and swollen valise (indicating anything but a hasty departure), would become the object of pleasant criticism to the quizzical dandies and young ladies of the party—pleasant, I mean, to them; but wretched work for the hapless wight exposed to their pitiless pelting. Even when this scrutiny was over, what were they to do with their unexpected, self-elected companion? His horse was now too tired, and much too ugly at any time to accompany such gay palfreys as were prancing over the lawn; yet they could not, in common civility, leave a stranger adrift; nor could they accompany him back to the house, without breaking up their expedition for the day.

All this flashed through my mind in a moment, and left me in a dire dilemma. I pulled up my jaded nag, however, with such a jerk, that I well nigh threw him on his haunches. Fortunately, a little unevenness in the ground hid me from the view of the advancing cavalry; and at the same critical instant I discovered an opening in the fence on one side. Without considering or caring whither it might lead, I turned my charger round, urged him forwards with whip and spur, and dashed into the gap as if I had been flying from the arm of justice, instead of making my escape from as companionable a set of people as ever breathed. Had any of the party detected the bashful fugitive, and given chase, he must have been caught; for the path into which I had fled terminated in a road leading to some farm offices, but with no opening beyond.

The awkwardness of my situation, which was already considerable, became greatly augmented by this ridiculous proceeding; and I heard the riders pass within twenty yards of my hiding-place, with the most unspeakable alarm lest any one of them should catch a glimpse of me nestling behind a cart of hay. I breathed freer when the last servant's horse crossed the ridge; and then, creeping from my hole, soon gained the stables adjoining the house, gave up my horse, secured the well-stuffed valise out of sight, and repaired, according to the original precious scheme, to the front door with my letter. I stood for five minutes with the knob of the bell in my hand, irresolute whether to go on with the adventure, or fairly to cut and run from it. At length, when the fatal pull was given, I listened to the sound, and felt

myself what statesmen call 'fully committed.' There was now nothing left but to screw up my courage, as I best might, to meet the dangers and difficulties of the crisis.

There happened to be no one at home except the old lady herself, so that the plan succeeded very well; and, though I now forget the details of the introduction, I can never cease to remember, that the unbounded cordiality of the reception, not only from this excellent person, but from the master and mistress of the house, and all their assembled friends, showed how totally I had miscalculated the nature and extent of Irish hospitality. I learned, indeed, in no long time, that the fashion of the country is to receive every stranger as well, and to treat him with exactly the same perfect frankness and kindness, as they would do if they really knew him to merit such attention at their hands. If it shall prove on further acquaintance that he fails to make good his claim,-they then behave to him accordingly; but in the first instance his title to a hospitable reception is always taken for granted.

As most of the delightful party, amongst whom I now found myself domesticated, are still alive (though more than twenty years have gone by since those days), I scarcely feel at liberty to describe the sayings and doings of the establishment into which I was so freely and confidentially admitted. Nothing, indeed, could be more characteristic of the country than the whole scene. There were several elderly persons, then in the autumn of life, though now waning into octogenarians; and several were very young folks, scarcely able to walk, who now count many 'daughters and sons of beauty.' There was a pretty equal admixture of Irish and English, amongst whom were several persons of rank; also one or two foreigners; besides much native wit, worth, and beauty, of the highest order, and all most delightfully set off by the graces and nameless enchantments of refined manners, and tasteful as well as useful accomplishments. I have rarely, if ever, seen in any part of the world so fascinating an assemblage of all that could render a country party agreeable as was here collected in one of the most out-of-the-way corners of Ireland. Nor is it to be wondered at if I very soon began to think of the ship and her routine drudgery with a degree of distaste I dared scarcely express even to myself. Compared to the delirious sort of witchery of this gay scene, everything I had enjoyed before, even in the all-romantic Peninsula, or in the beautiful islands of Madeira or Bermuda, looked spiritless and tame. The dull duties and discomforts of a sea-life, the trammels of naval discipline, and the insignificance of a mere lieutenant's station, amidst all this luxury, and fashion, and wealth, and beauty, and rank, pressed on my fevered thoughts so severely, that at times I was half distracted with sheer despondency, and felt cut to the heart on recollecting the bitter necessity of returning to what seemed, at that intoxicating season, the vulgar duties of a sailor's life. My worthy captain's advice was thrown to the winds; and indeed any heart, aged twenty-two, must have been made of cast-iron to have resisted the rides and walks, the pic-nic dinners, the dances, and the music parties, and suppers, besides the infinitely varied round of other amusements, grave and gay, which contributed to render, and will for ever preserve, this nook of Ireland the true terrestrial paradise of my juvenile days.

How the deuce I ever contrived to get out of the magic circle, I hardly know; but if I could only feel myself at liberty, without a breach of confidence, to give a few details of those hours, I would stake great odds on the side of the effect which the description of such a reality might produce, against the interest of the imaginary scenes in almost any romance. Although, unfortunately, this may not be done, I cannot resist the temptation of relating the cause and consequence of my first acquaintance with these very kind persons, who, from that hour to this, have held their station amongst my steadiest friends.

I have already mentioned, that the gentleman whose introduction I carried was most urgent for me to deliver the letter in person; but he gave no reasons for this anxiety; nor indeed was I then aware, that besides his being an intimate friend, he was their family physician. While acting in this capacity, he had seen with regret how ineffectual his art had proved to alleviate the mother's sorrow caused by the recent loss of her favourite son. The young man had been in the Navy, and was about my age and standing in the service. These accidental coincidences suggested to her judicious and kind-hearted friend, that as I, in some degree, resembled, in appearance and in manners, the officer who was no more, the poor mother's thoughts and feelings might possibly be diverted into a new channel, by the society of a person in so many respects similarly circumstanced to the child she had lost.

I was not made a party to this manœuvre, because the experiment might thus have been totally marred. It was obvious, indeed, that the mere consciousness of acting such a part must have imposed an awkward restraint upon me, fatal to the character I was intended to fill; so the good doctor left matters to work out their own course. A very different effect, it is true, from what he wished and expected, might have been produced; for instead of my being received with open arms, and helping to fill up the blank in the mother's wasted affections, my presence might only have proved irksome, from tending to keep alive the anguish of those wounds, which principle tells us rather to do our utmost to heal than seek to irritate by unavailing sorrow.

It so happened, fortunately for me, and, what was of more consequence, fortunately for the friendly physician's reputation as a skilful 'minister to the mind diseased,' or rather to the pure but desolate heart, that the experiment completely succeeded—I hope and believe, to the mother's consolation. To me, of course, the reception I met with was matter of delight and astonishment; and at the time I could not by any means account for the notice with which I was honoured. So much so, indeed, that I occasionally felt somewhat startled, and almost oppressed, with the sense of obligation imposed by such unusual and unmerited attentions.

The first explanation which reached me of the mystery, to whose agency I was so deeply indebted, is really so touching in itself, and likewise so fertile, as I conceive, in matter for useful reflection to those who may be similarly circumstanced, that

I give it without reserve. The whole incident (though to some it may perhaps appear trivial) had a very essential effect in modifying the course of my subsequent life; not so much by raising me in my own opinion, which it certainly did, as by inspiring me with still stronger motives to exertion, and with higher hopes of deserving, in time, a distinction so very flattering. In a letter which I received from this most excellent old lady, about six months after my first acquaintance with her, and just before I quitted England for the East Indies, these words occur:—

"Once more adieu! I must hope you will write to me; let me constantly know how you proceed, and how I can address you; and recollect, you have received the freedom of this house. I believe I told you I had lost a son in the Navy, a lieutenant, and of superior talents. I therefore consider that Heaven has given you to my care in his place—and may the Almighty protect you!"

CHAPTER III.

TRICKS UPON TRAVELLERS.

A CURIOUS and vastly pleasing fashion prevails in that part of Ireland where I was so nearly bewitched as almost to forget my ship, my duties, and everything else, but beauty bright! When a country party, such as I have been describing, had passed a certain time together, they seldom broke up entirely, or scattered themselves in different directions, but generally shifted, or emigrated in a body (flitted, I think they used to call it) to the house of some one of the number. Now and then various members of the group dropped off by the way, but their places were presently filled up by other friends, either ready in the new hive, or who soon found their way to it, when the well-known sounds of festivity were heard in the neighbourhood.

In this manner the country party, into which I had been so kindly admitted an honorary member, made several moves, with sundry losses and sundry accessions to its numbers; and as every day rendered this life more and more grateful, I could scarcely bear to think of returning to the tame occupations and rugged society of the frigate, the duties of which had so recently been my greatest and most sincere delight. Meanwhile, since my good-natured captain, and still better-natured messmates, made no difficulties about this protracted absenteeism, I continued to involve myself deeper and deeper at every step. I failed not to perceive at times that I was getting into rather a dangerous scrape for a younger son and a young officer, who had yet to work his own way in the world. But as these reflections interfered rather impertinently with the enjoyments of the hour, they were crushed down, and kept out of sight as much as possible at that gay period.

What surprised me most, all this time, was the air of refinement and high polish in the Irish society amongst which I was thus casually thrown. I had previously entertained an idea that their hospitality, proverbial in all parts of the world, was of a rude and rather troublesome description. I found it, on the contrary, marked not only by the strongest lines of sincerity and kindness, but by many of those delicate touches of consideration for the feelings of others which form the most indubitable symptoms of genuine good-breeding. So very carefully, indeed, are these traits preserved as characteristics of their society, that rather more latitude in the intercourse of young people than I remember to have seen elsewhere is not only permitted, but even perhaps encouraged. The propriety, as well as safety, of all this, consists in the perfect confidence which the parties possess in one another's sense of what is due to themselves; so that a degree of freedom which in England might possibly be called bold or odd, is in Ireland merely one branch of a peculiar system of manners. It rests, no doubt, on as scrupulous a foundation of sentiment and principle as ours does, but it is less restricted by etiquettes, and far less frozen over with those conventional forms which the uninitiated find so troublesome to break through.

Instead of discovering that the stories were true about the sort of compulsion used in matters of drinking, I can safely say, whatever might have been once the fashion, that, during the course of experience in joviality I went through in the north of Ireland, I seldom met with anything at a gentleman's table approaching even to exigeance on this score, far less to the formidable bullying which we had been warned against, when the alternative rested between another bottle or an ounce of lead. I do not deny that our friends the Irish have a wonderfully winning way of insinuating their good cheer upon us, and sometimes of inducing us, without the aid of fire-arms, to swallow more claret than is perhaps good for us.

I landed once at Burncrana, a pretty little quiet village, with a watering-place look, on the eastern banks of that great and beautiful bay Lough Swilly. One side of this fine harbour is formed by the bold promontory of Inishowen, celebrated in every land for its noble whiskey, second only, if second it be, (which I am bound as a Scotchman to doubt,) to that of Ferntosh or Glenlivet. I was accompanied by an English gentleman, on the first day of his landing in Ireland. As he then seriously imagined the inhabitants to belong to a sort of wild and uncouth race, I could see he was rather surprised at the gentlemanlike deportment of an acquaintance of mine resident on the spot, for whom he had brought a letter. We had walked together to his house, or rather cottage, for he was not a fixed resident, but came there for summer quarters. The neatness, and even elegance, of the domestic arrangements of his temporary establishment, both without and within the dwelling, gave token of a taste many degrees removed from the state of people far back in civilisation. Presently the ladies came; and their national frankness, modified by the most entire and unaffected simplicity, puzzled my friend completely. In due season the dressing-bell sent us off to prepare for dinner; and while we were getting ready, my companion said to me—

"I see perfectly what this fellow is at: he means to sew you and me up, by pouring claret down our throats. You may do as you please; but I'll be shot if he plays off his Irish pranks on me. I will eat his dinner, take a couple of glasses of his wine, make my bow to the ladies, go on board by eight or nine o'clock, and, having given

them a dinner in return, shall have done my duty in the way of attention; after which I shall totally cut the connexion. I have no idea of their abominable fashion of forcing strangers to drink."

"We shall see," said I; and having knocked the dust off our shoes, down we went to dinner.

Everything was plain, and suitable to the pretensions of a cottage. There was no pressing to eat or drink during dinner; and in process of time the cloth was removed, the ladies sipped a little sweet wine, and disappeared.

"Now for it," whispered my friend; "he has sent the women out of the way, that he may ply us the better."

And I must own things looked rather suspicious; for our host, instead of sitting down again at the dinner-table, walked to a bow-window overlooking the anchorage, and exactly facing the setting sun, at that hour illuminating the whole landscape in the gorgeous style peculiar to combined mountain and lake scenery.

"Why should we not enjoy this pleasant prospect while we are discussing our wine?" said the master of the house.

At that instant the door opened, and in walked the servant, as if he knew by intuition what was passing in his master's head.

"Tim," said our host, "put the card-table here in the bow-window, and give us some other glasses; also, if you have such a thing, bring up a bottle of claret."

Tim nodded, smiled, and made the fitting adjustments. The table was barely large enough to hold a noble long-corked bottle, for the fashion of claret-decanters had not as yet reached that remote district of the empire. Round the margin was placed the necessary accompaniment of capacious glasses—famous tall fellows, with such slender stalks that they seemed scarcely equal to the weight of their generous load.

My friend and I exchanged glances, and I could see his shoulders slightly raised, as if he was saying internally—

"Now we are in for it! but I will not drink a drop more than I choose."

The claret, which in itself was most delicious, was cooled in as perfect style as if it had been subject to the skill of an Abdar or professional wine-cooler at Madras. The party consisted, I think, of four or five persons (I forget exactly which), but this one bottle, I remember, just passed round the group twice. As the flavour of the beverage appeared to have become more exquisite at the second turn than at the first, though but a short interval had been allowed to elapse, it seemed odd that another bottle was not instantly called for. Instead of which our landlord went on expatiating on the beauties of the Lough, and the fineness of the season in general, and the sunset in particular, for full five minutes after the wine had disappeared; when he suddenly said, with a half-hesitating tone, towards my English friend, who sat at his elbow—

"I beg your pardon! perhaps you would take some more wine?"

As no one made any objection, the bell was rung, and Tim re-appeared, bearing with him another bottle. This likewise vanished in a trice, and Tim was again summoned.

"Bring some more claret," said the master to the man, or rather boy, as he was called, though twice as old as any of the party.

At this instant I caught my companion's eye; and I could see he was becoming alive to the plot against him, so much so, indeed, that he seemed to be preparing to rise. The following conversation, however, attracted his attention, and fixed him to his seat.

"Well, Tim, what are you gaping at? Why don't you run for the clar't?"

"I didn't know," replied the other, "whether you'd like to use the whole of it."

"Use the whole of it!" exclaimed his master—"what does the boy mean? What are you at, Tim?"

"Oh, sir," quoth the well-instructed rogue, "I knew you came here only for a short time, and as the wine you brought was but little, I didn't know but you might wish not to use it all entirely today." And then he whispered something in his master's ear, the words of which we could not distinguish. The reply, however, showed, or seemed to show, what had been said.

"Nonsense, Tim, nonsense! you're an ass, man; bring it up."

Tim accordingly disappeared, but soon returned with a basket apparently full of straw; at the bottom of which, however, after some considerable show of hunting, a couple of bottles were said to be found.

"Confound you, Tim; is this all?" said the host.

"It is, sir," lied Tim; "and in faith, sir," added he, still lying, "it's one more bottle than I thought there was; for there was but a dozen when we started from Derry a week ago; and you know, sir, you and the collector on last Tuesday——"

But the catalogue of circumstances which were intended to act as buttresses to Master Tim's inventions was cut short by a peremptory order to leave the room. This he did so soon as he had made a circumbendibus to escape notice, and deposited the basket behind his master's chair, muttering, as he put it down with a thump—

"There's as good a couple of bottles of wine as ever was uncorked."

The fresh broach was indeed so delicious that we could hardly believe it was of the same vintage as that of the previous bin, though our host assured us it was 'the identical.' At all events, under its genial inspiration, the glorious sun, which was just touching the tops of the hills above Rathmullin, seemed already becoming doubly glorious, and the whole landscape more brilliant than ever.

Tim's basket well merited a still higher eulogium than he had given it; but while his reputation as a judge of wine rose, his character for veracity fell in about the same proportion, since we beheld, in due season, not merely two, but three, and at last a fourth long-necked gentleman from Bordeaux emerge from under the straw!

The trick played upon us by these confederates was now apparent enough; but the wine, fortunately, was of that light and pure kind which does not produce much effect on strong heads, and that of my companion was proof against far greater

trials than this. He was indeed perfectly aware of what was passing; and though dearly loving the wine (which he told me afterwards was superior to any he had ever before tasted), and thirsting vehemently for more, yet he had no notion of being made tipsy by means of a common-place concert between host and butler. He therefore rose to leave the room, expecting, of course, to be forcibly detained, or, at all events, he reckoned upon being begged and entreated to sit down again.

Not a whit! The wily native knew his man exactly, and, instead of arresting his guest by force or by supplication, merely observed to him that if he had a mind to admire the prospect, there was still daylight enough to command a view down the bay from the little knoll on the right. The Englishman was sorely puzzled by all this. He saw there was none of the detention he expected would be practised upon him, and yet he had a strong consciousness that he was undergoing the operation well known afloat and ashore by the title of 'the game of humbug.' At the same time, he felt the most eager desire to take another good pull at the claret.

There was no wine before us at this critical juncture of the evening, and our landlord, who, most unaccountably, seemed indifferent to this material circumstance, went on prosing for a quarter of an hour about Protestant ascendancy, the eternal siege of Derry, the battle of the Boyne, and such-like stale topics. At length one of the company, whose interest in these subjects resembled that of a man who has never looked through a telescope when listening to the conversation of a company of astronomers, became somewhat impatient, and, watching for a pause, asked his host if it were the custom in Ireland to discuss Orange politics with empty glasses?

"God bless me," cried the other, with well-feigned surprise, "is there no wine on the table?" and ringing the bell furiously, scolded poor Tim so naturally that the confederate was almost thrown out.

"Well! you numskull, why don't you make off with you, and bring something for the gentlemen to drink?"

Tim stood fast till interrogated a second time, and then replied, with perfect gravity, that there was not another drop of wine in the house, swearing by all manner of saints to the truth of his assertion.

Upon this the master got up in a rage, and brushing past the servant, declared his intention of searching the cellar himself. He was absent some time; and before he came back, we had prevailed on our hesitating companion to sit down again. Just as the stranger took his place, and as if there had been some electrical communication between his chair and the handle of the door, it opened, and in walked our generous entertainer, exulting in his success, crowing like chanticleer, and bearing in each hand a couple of bottles, clicking against each other; while Tim, with a degree of impudence equalled only by that of his master, substituted clean glasses, of a still more capacious swallow than the first. To these were added two pair of candles which towered high above the jolly crew, and promised to last till another dawn should look in upon our revels.

By this time the twilight had almost entirely ebbed away, and was succeeded by that cheerful, aurora-kind of brilliancy in the sky, which points out the place of the sun during the whole of his summer night's journey in those high latitudes. Politics dropped out of the conversation by general consent, for the joyous juice of the grape soon melted us all into one mind; and a hundred topics of more pleasing interest were started, in which the strangers could join without fear of any angry discussion. I will not say that these were debated without warmth, for the mirth and animation of the company rose very pleasantly as each fresh bottle found its way by some magical process to the table. But I must own it was sometimes rather difficult to tell who were the listeners amongst us, or to say who was guest and who landlord, for the party seemed like a circle of brothers, all equally at home.

This went on for an indefinite length of time, but I should be the veriest conjuror on earth to say how long. Through the hazy atmosphere of my recollection of that jolly evening, I remember that about eleven o'clock, more or less, our host was enchanted almost beyond the power of words with seeing his wine so much relished, and tickled also with the good joke of having succeeded, as he imagined, in throwing the suspicious Englishman off his guard, and making him drink just as much wine as he, the Irishman, thought fit to impose. On this occasion, however, he inverted the proverb, and reckoned without his guest; for, by one imprudent remark, he had well nigh torn the laurels from his brow.

"Well, sir!" he exclaimed, "although this is the first day you ever set foot on the island, you have seen enough, I hope, to satisfy you that we are not quite such savages as you supposed. Political liberty we have not got, it is true; but liberty hall is the true title of every Irish gentleman's dining-room: there's no compulsion here, you must see very clearly."

It was but little, however, that my English friend could now see very clearly of anything, for by this hour both the physical and moral optics of the company were mystified out of all distinct focus of adjustment; and the above premature announcement of victory on the part of the native, hurried back all the stranger's suspicions that he was speedily to be made a martyr at the shrine of old Bacchus. Fired with this idea, he started on his feet, and eyeing the door for a long time before he ventured on the voyage, with a bold determination, and taking a good departure from his chair, he gained his port. He had undoubtedly expected to be lugged back again; for he whisked the tails of his coat out of reach, while, with his other hand on the lock of the door, and swaying himself about from side to side, like a ship in a calm, he stood the very image of tottering equilibrium, as the mathematicians call it.

Our adroit landlord, who was not a man to shrink from difficulties, mustered to his aid all the resources of a long well-practised hospitality, and gallantly met this great occasion. It is true, he had now some three or four bottles of wine under his girdle more than when he and Tim had tricked the party about the poverty of the cellar, just as the sun was going down. That manœuvre, and all other similar devices, were, of course,

exhausted; so he took another line, and called out,

"Oh, you're off, are you?—wish you joy—you'll find the ladies in the drawing-room. I think I hear the tinkle of the piano: I prefer the tinkle of the glass. Pray tell the damsels we are coming by and by: mind you say 'by and by.' I don't like to be too particular, for fear of seeming rude: don't you see?"

This speech was wound up by a telegraphic flourish of the hand towards Tim, who stood near, with a bottle between his feet, the screw buried in the cork, and his body bent to the effort, which he only delayed to exercise till ordered by his master.

"Out with him, man! out with the cork!" cried the host. The loud report which succeeded rang over the apartment like the sweetest music to the souls of the ever-thirsty company. Tim's thunder was echoed back by a truly bacchanalian shout, such as nothing on earth can give proper emphasis to, except a double allowance of claret. The Englishman, fairly subdued by the sound, glided again to the table; then seizing his brimming glass in one hand, and grasping the fist of his merry host in the other, he roared out,

"You really are an uncommon good fellow; and hang me if ever I distrust an Irishman again as long as I live!"

But within three minutes afterwards this promise was broken; for as soon as we had discussed the bottle which the incomparable Tim had so opportunely introduced, the master of the house, seeing us at length quite at his mercy, and eager to go on, rose, and said, to our great amaze,

"Come! we've had wine enough; let's join the ladies in the next room."

The disappointed company stared at one another, and loudly proclaimed that it was not fair to limit us in this way. The Englishman, in particular, wished to remain; but our host was inexorable. Meanwhile, Timothy grinned from ear to ear, familiar with his master's tricks upon travellers; and the landlord deliberately opening the door, marched off the field of battle with flying colours.

As we moved along to the drawing-room, my companion whispered to me,

"I must own, I have been well served for my suspicions. I made quite certain of being bullied into drinking more than was agreeable to me; but it turns out," added he, laughing, "quite the reverse; for I cannot get a drop of wine, now that I want it."

"Well! well!" cried our hospitable friend, who overheard the conclusion of this remark, "you shall do as you please ever after this evening."

He then showed us to a couple of snug rooms, which he said were ours, as long as we chose to occupy them.

For the rest, I went off to the Giant's Causeway in the course of next day; and on returning, at the end of a week, found that my friend, instead of cutting the connexion, according to promise, had not once been out of sight of the house, and had never been asked to drink a bottle, or even a glass, more than he liked. He declared, indeed, that he had rarely, in any country, met with persons so truly hospitable, or more gentlemanlike, or so perfectly reasonable, in the truest sense of these words, than accident had thrown him in the way of becoming acquainted with, in what, previously, he had considered a region inhabited almost by a different set of beings from his own countrymen.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FARMERS' SOCIETY.

It would be doing scrimp justice, however, to the dear Green Island, were it not to be mentioned, that in some districts, and amongst certain tribes of the merry natives, a few rough touches of the ancient manners are still preserved entire, to the great amusement of the parties themselves, and to the high edification, no doubt, of such novices as myself in the mysteries of hard drinking.

Not very long after the occurrence above related, in which Tim and his master quizzed the strangers in such good style, I had occasion to visit a city at some distance from Lough Swilly. I was charged by my friends in Scotland to make inquiries into various topics, particularly that of Fiorin; and having soon become acquainted with the late Dr. Richardson, readily obtained all the information required from that enthusiastic advocate for the cultivation of the grass just named.

Before I set out for Port Rush, the head quarters of Fiorin cultivation, a merry friend of mine hearing me ask some questions about corn-crops, hay-crops, and such matters, begged to know if I should not like to be introduced to the Farmers' Society of their good city; "for there," said he, "you will meet with all the best informed agriculturists of the country." Of course, I gladly accepted his offer, and that of his companionship to the Society's dinner on that very day. As we walked to the house, which I think lay about a mile or so beyond the limits of the town, I taxed my memory for all the queries which had been put to me on the subject of farming, resolving to apply these at the most fitting moments, and rejoicing over the famous opportunity I now had of reaping a grand harvest of information, at a small cost of trouble.

On we trudged to a pretty little country inn, which we reached just as the dinner was rattling on the table. The party consisted of a dozen persons, or there may have been a dozen and a half, as pleasant men, in their way, as could be met with. Before the repast was over, I chanced to ask my treacherous friend, next whom I was placed, some questions on the subject of turnip husbandry. He heard me out, and laughed exceedingly; but instead of answering, called out to the chairman of the meeting,

"I beg to inform you, sir, that the gentleman on my right wishes to know whether we in the north of Ireland pull up our turnips, or let them remain in the ground, as in East Lothian, for the sheep to eat? Now, sir, I take this to be an agricultural question, don't you?"

"Certainly it is," replied the president.

"Undoubtedly agricultural!" cried out the rest of the company; upon which, turning to the waiter, the chairman said, in a chuckling and delighted tone,

"Boy! take the glass to Mr. Hall, the strange gentleman there."

Accordingly, a glass, not very much above the ordinary size, was handed to me, and straightway filled with whiskey-toddy. This I was required by the president to drink off instantly.

"On what compulsion? and wherefore?" I asked, laughing, with the glass at my lips.

"Oh!" exclaimed he, "on no compulsion at all, my dear sir; for this, you must know, is Liberty Hall. Do exactly as you please, only conforming to the laws of the Association; that is to say," continued the president, grinning, "you will of course see the obvious propriety of complying with the fixed rules of the Farmers' Society, one of the strictest of which very properly is, that no one present shall allude to the subject of agriculture, much less discourse upon it, as you have done, or ask any questions?"

There was a national comicality about this queer rule which was of course quite unanswerable; so I paid the penalty, and drank off the punch, without further delay; for it was admirable in its ingredients, and, what is almost as important, admirably concocted.

I had no sooner emptied the glass, than I was ordered to fill and swallow another bumper, as a fine for having used the left hand instead of the right; and when I remonstrated against the injustice of fining a man for breaking laws, of the existence of which he had never before heard, the president said, with mock gravity,

"Do you really suppose, sir, that such an excuse as not knowing the existence of a law against hog-stealing would help you in a court of justice, if you were to run off with a pig?" The reasoning was again unanswerable, so down went the drink.

Good whiskey-punch, well made, is certainly, of all the tipples ever invented by mortal man, the most insinuating and the most loving, because, more than any other, it disposes the tippler to be pleased with himself. It brightens his hopes, assuages his sorrows, crumbles down his difficulties, softens the hostility of his enemies, and, in fact, inclines him, for the time being, to think generously of all mankind, at the tip-top of which it naturally and good-naturedly places his own dear self, with a glass in one hand and a mug in the other, without a wish ungratified, and as unsuspicious of evil as if not a single drop of gall, or a sprig of wormwood, existed on the face of the earth!

My merry agricultural friends, who knew all the depths and shallows of the most delightful of all navigations, that of a punch-bowl, were well aware that if they could, by any means, get the unwary stranger to pass a certain point of moderation, no additional impulse on their part would be required to bring about the grand consummation they aimed at, and which they were all the more bent upon, from seeing me a little on my guard.

It need scarcely be told that I failed, and that they succeeded in making me enter their trap. I have, indeed, only a very confused impression of the whole scene; but I do remember seeing the hands of the clock dancing a jig about the hour of twelve, and have some faint recollection of being made to drink at least three times to the glorious and immortal memory of King William III., merely because I could not find articulation or reflection enough to repeat, without tripping, an immense long tail to this royal and loyal Orange toast.

The first distinct image which remains on my mind of this after-dinner scene is what the architects call a 'plafond' view of the table; that is, such a prospect of its under surface as can be obtained only by the spectator lying flat on his back upon the floor. I could discover that there was singing going on above me, and much rattling of glass. I could also detect the well-known sound of the toddy, in the act of being poured from one mug to another, the only genuine method of mixing the terrestrial ingredients which go to the formation of this most perfect of celestial beverages. Its sole rival seems to be the delicious iced sherbet of the torrid zone, when eagerly quaffed, at some sleepless midnight, on Choultry Plain, with the thermometer at 100°, and the arid land-wind drifting over the ground, like the air of a blast-furnace, from the red-hot sands of the Carnatic.

Be that as it may, I contrived to crawl out, unseen, between two chairs, across which a worthy agriculturist was stretched, like one of his own sheep ready for the market, with his hands touching the floor on one side, his feet on the other. I escaped to the garden, and there walked or rolled about for half an hour, somewhat in the style of a Portsmouth wherry on the Spit, at the meeting of the tides. The evening was mild and beautiful, and the clear fresh air revived, though it failed to steady me. At last, deep in the night, the party broke up, the sleepers were awakened, and off we all set on our return to the city. We made such zigzag traverses along the road, that had quadrilles been known in those days, the passengers might have imagined we were practising for the ensuing county ball. Not content with these vagaries in the 'fair way,' we must needs mount upon the top of the sea-wall; one side of which, towards the road, was not above a yard high; but the other looking outwards, might be twenty or thirty perpendicular feet from the beach; while the top was only four or five feet in breadth. The least gay of the party pronounced vehemently against this route; but the quality of whiskey, as I have before observed, being to level difficulties and hide dangers, the precipice towards the sea appeared hardly high enough or steep enough for the magnanimous courage of our agriculturists, some of whom kept coasting along the outer edge of the parapet, within the breadth of a furrow, as they said, of the next world, solely to augment the risk, and so to do honour to the generous spirit by which they were moved.

Such are the sort of pranks which Pat is apt to divert himself withal, when he has no real business in hand, or when his duties, public or domestic, do not claim his serious attention. It is true, he is sometimes a wild hand enough to deal with, even when not a drop of the cratur has passed his lips; but he is not a whit more so, I verily believe, than either English, Scotch, or Welshman, when fairly roused into action by motives suitable to his peculiar national temperament. We have hardly any seamen in the fleet who are more sober and orderly, or who, when properly managed, are more docile and amenable to really good discipline, than the Irish. Perhaps it may occasionally happen that there is a difficulty in getting Paddy to see things in the particular light in which we

wish him to view them, or, as we say, to make him cast with his head on the right tack; but there is no man who performs more or better work when once this is accomplished.

I remember being much struck with this peculiarity of the Irish character some years after the period of the farmers' feast above described. Indeed, I have not unfrequently been puzzled in Ireland to recognise the same individual when engaged in transacting important affairs, and when he allowed himself to relax after the serious work was over.

In the autumn of the year 1817, on returning from India with important despatches on board, I reached the chops of the British Channel, in command of a sloop-of-war. So confident were we of reaching Spithead in a day or two at furthest, that my travelling trunk was packed, and best boots polished, ready for a start to town. But, just as we expected to strike soundings, the wind shifted to the eastward, and we were blown off so far to sea, that we were well nigh starved. After much beating about, we succeeded in reaching the west coast of Ireland, harassed to the last degree. I landed with my dispatches, accompanied by several passengers, at the little town of Bantry, which gives its name to a splendid estuary, perhaps the finest in the world, and one which must rise into immense importance whenever the present heartless and systematic agitations of Ireland shall be allowed to subside, and that magnificent portion of the empire shall have become as much an integral part of England as the banks of the Forth and Clyde have so happily been rendered by the permanent, and cordial, and mutually beneficial union of the lesser with the greater country.

There happened to be a fair at Bantry; and it so fell out, that just as we landed, a furious battle with shillelahs was commencing close to the beach; so that we had before us the actual representation of a scene which we had often heard described, but never really witnessed. A householder, why or wherefore we could not find out, had refused to pay certain taxes or municipal duties. On intimation being given him, that upon a certain day his furniture and other goods would be distrained, he prepared to do anything rather than submit. At all events, he was resolved to have a fight for it. Such was the story we were told on landing, as to the cause of the wild uproar which saluted us.

The owner of the house laid his plans with some degree of that military skill which all men acquire in a turbulent country. He prevailed on a dozen or twenty of his friends to stow themselves away in his rooms, and, at a given signal, when the officers of government were in full pursuit of the articles named in their bond, they started up, shillelah in hand, and played crack! crack! crack! to the right and left. Twenty heads were broken in less than twenty seconds. As we jumped out of our boat, delighted to touch the ground after so long a voyage, these were the first sounds which greeted our ears, mixed up with loud cheers by the different parties, as victory swerved from side to side.

It was difficult for persons, so ignorant as we were of such things, to believe that so much execution could be done in such a short period. Before we reached the brow of the hill, however, which overlooked the village, an interval of only a few minutes, it was all ended. On our way we encountered four or five of the wounded, preciously mauled to be sure, in charge of a reserve party of officers, who, suspecting the ambush, had assembled in readiness to support the first detachment.

This episode, added to the ordinary bustle and business in a fair, caused us the greatest difficulty in getting away from the town. No carriages or horses were to be hired at any price; and I really know not what we should have done, had not a gentleman, seeing our distress, dismounted from his horse, and, prevailing on one or two others to do the same, kindly offered them to us, that we might proceed without further delay to Skibbereen, the nearest town through which the mail passed.

It was after sunset before we left the uproarious scene at Bantry, the sounds of which we could trace long after we left the village; and by the time we reached our destination it was dark, or nearly so. On alighting from our nags at the inn door, a gentleman stepped forward; and, with the air of a person who has been waiting for some friends, addressed us in these words:

"You're welcome, at last, gentlemen! I hope, indeed, you may not be too late; the piece is just about to commence, and there is much difficulty about places; so come along!"

All this being Hebrew to us, we begged to know what was required, conceiving that we must be mistaken for some other party.

"Oh, no, gentlemen, it's not a bit of a mistake! I discovered at first sight that you were just landed, and I thought you would surely like to see the play, which is now acting, or soon to be acted, with great applause in the Court House. Strolling theatricals they are (not a regular company—we don't sport that yet), but very good ones of their kind; so come along, as the place is crammed full to the ceiling already. Nevertheless, there'll always be room for strangers, which you will soon perceive."

As the coach was not to pass for some hours, and no post-horses could be procured, we yielded to our obliging friend's entreaties, and proceeded, booted and spurred, and as we were, to the theatre. With much difficulty we reached the bottom of the stairs, the ascent of which appeared an utter impossibility. At length our guide made himself heard; and the moment the crowd were informed that the party consisted of strangers, a lane was formed, and we reached the upper door. The same magical words had the effect of displacing several gentlemen in the best part of the house, and we presently found ourselves seated in the midst of some very pleasant company, in good time for the curtain drawing up. Our friendly pilot now left us, saying, that although he had got us in, he could not stay himself; "but," whispered he, "after the play, come you to the Harp and Crown, and there you'll find supper ready, all piping hot for you, and beds with well-toasted sheets, and places secured in the coach; so give yourselves no manner of concern about the future, but enjoy the play and the society about you."

Our friend proved himself even better than his

word; for he contrived to hire a chaise for me and my dispatches, by which means I was enabled to set off in the middle of the night. On reaching Cork, I found that I had exhausted all my cash, and had not wherewithal to prosecute the journey: but as a couple of my own quarterly-pay bills were safe in my pocket, it seemed impossible there could be any difficulty in getting money. On proceeding to the nearest bank, and presenting my government bills, the gentlemen in the office handed them from one to the other, held them to the light, whispered amongst themselves, inspected me in no very agreeable style, and at length said, they were really very sorry, but they could not give me money for this paper.

"It is very strange," I said. "In no part of the world in which I have ever been is any species of document representing money preferred to this."

"That may be, sir, but we can't help it; we cannot give you cash."

I went to another and another bank, but all to no purpose; tried mine host of the Red Lion, but he shook his head very distrustfully. I was sorely perplexed, and thought of going to the military commandant, but, unfortunately, he had left the city. In the morning of that day, after coming from Skibbereen, I had, of course, proceeded to Cove, about twenty miles from Cork, to report myself to the naval commander-in-chief; but as I had no doubt about the facility of getting money for government bills, I never dreamed, when there, of asking the Admiral to indorse them. As many hours must have been lost in returning all the way to Cove, I retraced my steps to one of the banks I had before attacked, and tried all my eloquence; but they were still obdurate, and I marched back to the street in despair. On my way to the inn, I was overtaken by one of the partners of the firm.

"Were you never in Cork before?" he asked; "and if so, don't you know any one in the city who could identify you?"

Before I could answer this question, he saw that I was hurt at his suspicions, and called out,

"Nay! nay! don't be angry, now, nor colour up, nor fly in a passion. There is no harm in being an object of suspicion, provided no injury is done you. And, for my part, I, individually, believe you really are the officer you represent yourself to be; and if the worst comes to the worst, you shall have the money to put you on your way; but I would rather go through with the affair in a business-like manner."

"Well," I said, "that is kind enough. I was once in Cork for a single day, six years ago, when I made acquaintance with Counsellor O'Brien."

"In that case," cried he, evidently much relieved, "the matter will soon be settled, for here is the very street in which the gentleman lives: let us call upon him."

As ill luck would have it, this person, the only man I was acquainted with in Cork, had that moment rode off from the door.

"There's a plague," said the banker, resuming his embarrassed air; "for, to be quite frank with you, we have lately been so grievously taken in by a swindler, who, pretending to be a naval officer, forged and passed off a considerable number of bills similar to those in your hand, that I fear you will find it next to impossible to negotiate them."

While I was pondering over this dilemma, and pacing up and down the streets with my friendly banker, he suddenly stopped, and, turning round, called, or rather shouted,

"Oh! now I think I have it! Did not you say, my good sir, that you were charged with dispatches to the Government, about the Mahratta war? Where are they? let me have a look at them."

This brilliant idea gave new life to the transaction, and away we trotted to the inn. The desk was speedily opened; Admiral Sir Richard King's orders, and Governor Elliott of Madras's dispatches, produced, with a whole bagful of packets from Calcutta, the Isle of France, the Cape, and St. Helena.

"Quite enough! quite enough!" almost screamed out the delighted man of cash. "You shall have the money, sir! you shall have the money! and that right speedily; and along with it many apologies for all this trouble, and detention, and suspicion; and perhaps we may end our acquaintance in a way you little think of: but of that we'll talk by and by."

"In the mean time," I said, "you must sit down and take your dinner with us; though I dare swear it is famously overcooked, since it is a couple of hours past the time it was ordered."

"No, no!" he cried, "I must run off to catch the money before the chest is locked; besides, I do not like to do things by halves. Take your dinner, and you'll see me here again in due time."

We did as he advised; ate our dinner, paid the bill, ordered the chaise round, and sat in readiness for a start, the moment the means of greasing the wheels, as my friend aptly called it, should be put in my possession.

Ere long, this most considerate of friends in need re-appeared, with the money in separate parcels; one of which held notes, another guineas, and a third change in silver. He made me count it all carefully, and then received from me the bills of exchange, which I signed before him.

"Now, my very kind *sir*," said I, holding out my hand, "let me thank you most sincerely for the essential service you have done me; and pray believe that I shall have no greater pleasure in the world than in being of use to you, if ever it lies in my power."

"Not so fast! not so fast!" cried he, affecting to refuse the proffered hand, "for I have a shrewd apprehension that, in spite of all these grateful assurances, you will make a demur at the very first, and perhaps the only favour I shall ever ask you, or have the means of asking you, in my life."

"What's that?" I demanded.

"Neither more nor less," he replied, laughing, "than that you should now give me the pleasure of your company over a bowl of punch, which I, who am allowed to be the best mixer in the county of Cork, will concoct in two or three minutes."

"But don't you think," said I, "as I have public and important dispatches to carry, and have already lost so much time, that I really ought to be proceeding to Dublin as fast as four horses can carry me?"

"There, now!" he exclaimed, "did not I say that you would make a difficulty about granting me the first and only favour I ever should have occasion to ask you? Besides, I don't at all understand your insinuating that time can ever be lost in drinking good punch; and lastly, but not least, I beg you to bear in mind, that but for me, you must either have been sticking here in the inn, or trudging down to the Cove, to beg pecuniary assistance from your Admiral. All which reasons you may lay before my Lords Commissioners for executing the office of Lord High Admiral, if you should be called upon to account for the delay; but out of this room, without discussing a bowl, depend upon it you shall not start! Kelly," he exclaimed, "Joe Kelly, man, get the things; and, d'ye hear, the best materials."

So, as there was now left no possible mode of escape, down we sat.

He had promised to complete his incantations in two minutes, but I am confident he occupied a good quarter of an hour in performing this apparently simple operation, upon all the details of which he descanted most learnedly; assuring his company that it was not the quality, or even proportions of the magical ingredients, so much as the exact attention to the best method of putting them together, that constituted the grand secret of manufacturing a prime bowl. On our expressing some doubts as to the possibility of all this, he pushed the goodly vessel into the middle of the table, drew back his chair, and exclaimed, "I'll let you take a note of everything I put in, and you may imitate me in all these movements; but I'll bet you ten to one your punch will not be worth drinking." And then he added, almost shouting with delight, as he sipped his own mixture, "No, sir, no! it's utterly impossible: I defy you and all the rest of the world combined to make such an elegant mess as that!"

It was, indeed, glorious; beyond the belief of inexperienced mortals. Much as I had been enchanted by the sublime toddy of the North, I was forced to own, in spite of my intoxicating recollections, then still fresh, after an interval of half-a-dozen busy years, that the punch of the South was the superior tipple of the two.

But what surprised me most, was the extraordinary and sudden change which had been wrought in the appearance of our worthy friend. Instead of the straightforward, dry, calculating, cautious, and painfully-formal man of accounts and securities, with whom I had been in discussion half the day, here sat a jovial, reckless, hearty, and totally unreserved boon companion, whose whole faculties appeared absorbed in a punch-bowl. This transmutation was begun and completed the very instant our money transactions were ended. The ink of my signature to the bills was not well dry, before he clapped his hands, sung out in a new key for 'the materials,' as he called them, and commenced the grand brewing, with a degree of energy of character, and certainty of purpose, which, I trust and hope, must, long ere this, have made his fortune.

CHAPTER V.

THE ADMIRALTY LIST.

In the midst of these gay doings, which were all very well for a time, but rather profitless on the whole, I was suddenly called upon either at once to take advantage of, or altogether to lose, an extremely favourable opening for promotion. The late Sir Samuel Hood, on being appointed commander-in-chief of the East India station, was applied to by my friends, and agreed to take me with him as one of his lieutenants. His list of protégés, he said, was a long one, and I must come in last; yet, as he promised to assist me in my turn, after his old followers were provided for, there could not be a moment's doubt on the occasion. In his letters, the Admiral dwelt very strongly on the importance of having the name of his young friend, as he was good enough to call me, placed likewise on the Admiralty list.

The purpose of this advice is easily explained. The Admiral on a foreign station is allowed actually to appoint, or promote, to certain vacancies only, any officer whom he pleases, who, of course, must be technically eligible; while on the occurrence of all other vacancies except those which are thus specifically placed at the Admiral's own disposal, he is positively instructed, from home, who are the particular officers to be named, and in what order they shall be taken. Hence this document is called the Admiralty List. People say, and I rather believe with truth, that the fortunate names which figure on it are written in the very autograph of the First Lord, who in this way retains in his own safe keeping the important key which unlocks the door of promotion, so difficult to open, and which so few, alas, can enter of all those poor wretches who claim admission!

In former times, whatever it be now, the Admirals abroad were allowed to appoint officers of their own selection to vacancies occasioned by death, or by the sentence of a court-martial; while they were instructed to nominate those persons only who stood on the Admiralty List to such vacancies as arose from officers falling sick and invaliding; from the accession of ships captured and purchased into the service; from officers deserting (which strange event has sometimes happened); or from the squadron being increased by ships built and launched on the station. I do not immediately remember any other source of vacancy. But as these last enumerated are, generally speaking, of much more frequent occurrence than those which fall to the Admiral's peculiar share, by deaths or courts-martial, an officer on the Admiralty List has a proportionately better chance of promotion than one who stands merely on that of the commander-in-chief.

These two lists, that of the Admiral's own private friends, and that of the Admiralty, differ essentially in one material feature of their construction. As a matter of course, the Admiral's list possesses some degree of stability; since a place upon it is generally won by long service under his flag, and retained there by personal esteem or family connexion. An Admiral's follower, indeed, far from being a term of reproach, is always one of honour, as it implies the confi-

dence and regard of the flag-officer. To get placed, therefore, however near the end, on the good books of a rising Admiral, or one likely to be much employed, is almost a certain road to promotion, provided the merit, or whatever it be, which first led to this distinction, be sustained at the proper favour-pitch by steady private and public conduct.

On the other hand, the whole history of the Admiralty List is kept a profound secret, or, what comes nearly to the same thing, is kept strictly out of sight of those it most concerns. It is well known to be formidably intricate in its arrangements, and very slippery in its promises; indeed, from the circumstance of its depending on the fluctuating interests of party politics, and the uncertainty of those calculations which regulate the balance of power amongst the conflicting statesmen of the day, it must be essentially pie-crusty in its texture. For it is sometimes thought in the political world, that as much may be done (and occasionally a great deal more is attempted), by propitiating antagonists as by rewarding friends. How all this may be in sound principle I cannot tell; but nothing in practice can be more unsteady, or less to be relied upon, as I too well know, than this said Admiralty List. Whether it be, as we hear so often alleged, the single-handed work of the First Lord, the concocted labours of the whole cabinet, or the compound result of casual interference on the part of the First Lord's colleagues at the Admiralty Board, I really know not. Probably all these influences, together with various others, some higher and some lower on the scale of government or opposition, co-operate in producing this naval state paper, so important to the fate and fortunes of many a forlorn, hope-worn middy and lieutenant. It is perhaps wrong to make use of the word co-operate in the above sentence; for, in all likelihood, any actual agreement, properly so called, amongst the patronising parties, is a matter quite out of the question. The First Lord's eventual decision, therefore, must always be what, in mechanics, is termed the resultant of many forces, urging his lordship's pen in different directions. Even this would lead to less difficulty in practice than it probably does, if the political forces alluded to were constant in their direction, or uniform in the degree of their power; but who shall venture to predicate such stability of purpose in public life?

Still, the advantages to an officer are very great of getting his name on this precious little slip of paper, though it be a most unofficial-looking note sheet, as I can testify, from having once incidentally been afforded a glimpse of it, on which, to my bitter despair and horror, my own name was not! And if the admiral of the station be also a personal friend, that source of favour, of course, adds another string to the young man's bow. Circumstances likewise occasionally arise, which enable an admiral who has an officer's interest really at heart, to give him an extra lift at the right moment, and in the right direction, provided his name actually stands on the Admiralty List, even though it be ever so low down. But these are deep mysteries, the details of which I should not presume to unveil even were I one of the initiated. The bare allusion to them almost makes me tremble, though personally, and for the time, removed from their awful influence.

Before sailing for India, I accordingly took a world of pains to make out this grand point, tormented my friends and relations most wofully, and, as I conceived, with eventual success. A distinct assurance was given to a near connexion of my own, and a member of parliament, that my name would certainly stand on the First Lord's list, to be sent out to India in his Majesty's ship Volage, of which I had the farther good fortune to be appointed junior lieutenant. A change at the Admiralty was then confidently expected; and I took every care, as I thought, to have it arranged that my name should not be omitted when the new First Lord came into power, and when, of course, another list would be sent to Sir Samuel Hood, then commander-in-chief in India, with the usual transpositions, exclusions, and additions, incident to all such official changes. I fancied, good easy man, that in place of suffering any loss, I should have the benefit of this fresh shuffle of the political cards, and perhaps have my name brought much nearer to the top of the pack.

Little dreamed I that, in the mêlée of official patronage and personal favour which shortly afterwards took place at head-quarters, my poor name would be dropped out altogether; still less did I imagine that it would cost me nearly a couple of years of most harassing correspondence, from the distance of ten or twelve thousand miles (half the girt of the globe), to set this apparently trivial matter to rights. The promises made in my behalf, I had then, and still have, every reason to believe were uttered in good faith; but as no record happened to be made at the instant of the engagement, this item, so important to me, so insignificant to all the rest of the world, was swallowed up and lost in the huge ocean of business and patronage with which the unhappy new First Lord of the Admiralty is always sure to be overwhelmed. The provoking consequence was, that I had the mortification, in India, of seeing sundry capital vacancies pass by, one after another, which, had I occupied even the very low place on the fresh list which I had filled on the old one, might have secured my promotion several years sooner than it came. That these broken engagements were entered into in perfect sincerity, was afterwards proved by the instant and full reparation which was made on the omission being pointed out. So that even the evil of this irritating delay, at first so blank and hopeless, was converted, more by judicious management on the part of my friends than by patience on mine, into a greater benefit than if the original mistake had never occurred.

The old Volage, in which we sailed for India, I am forced to confess, however reluctantly, was one of the least good-looking of all His Majesty's ships and vessels then afloat. But by this time I cared not one fig for the looks of my ship, though, a month or two before, I should have considered it a point of honour to maintain to the last the beauty of my frigate. I was delighted beyond measure to think that, at length, I was on the right road to promotion; and this satisfaction was more than doubled by finding the East was the region in which that great prize was to be sought for. No bucanier, indeed, ever "sought El Dorados in the sky" with

more fervour than I longed to visit those brilliant scenes, with which the youthful fancy is so richly stored by the perusal of the Arabian Nights, and other works of mingled reality and fiction; delicious stories, in which the most perfect truth of nature and of oriental manners is interwoven with so many imaginary circumstances of daring love-adventures, fierce conflicts, and preternatural agencies, that they irresistibly impart to the countries in which they are supposed to have occurred, a vivid and almost living interest, quite different, both in kind and degree, from any that can ever belong to scenes or incidents nearer home.

There are, I believe, temperaments so unreasonably sanguine, linked to imaginations so fervent, that their previous expectations of India are sadly disappointed by the reality; and I will not pretend to aver that, in every instance, the pleasure I had promised to myself from visiting the East has come up to what was reckoned upon. But I can say, with perfect truth, that these occasions were so infrequent and unimportant, that I cannot now, by any effort of memory, recall what, or when, or where, they occurred. I succeeded, it is true after some delay, in obtaining promotion, which was the grand (private) object of the voyage; and that circumstance may have helped to rose-colour the whole scene. A considerable period was passed in India, however, before this affair was settled; and I well remember moments when I half-dreaded even that long-desired event, from the chance of its taking me away from a country, the wonders, the beauties, and the luxuries of which I found had not been one-hundredth part exhausted by the active investigation of several years. On the contrary, all things appeared to gain only fresh interest the better they were known, and the more they were enjoyed. It is curious, and every way interesting to observe, indeed, that the genuine novelty of almost every strange land, instead of being diminished or exhausted, is actually augmented by inquiry. With respect to the East in particular, the more closely we examine it, the more we become conscious of viewing a greater number of new objects.

Absolute novelty, it must also be remembered, is not always a source of pleasure. There is generally a degree of confusion, arising, perhaps, from a difficulty of adjusting not only the optical but the mental focus, so as to see the truth, as it were, in correct perspective. The consciousness of ignorance with respect to the natural history, or other details, is also apt sometimes to interfere with the full relish of a totally new scene. There may be wonder, and even great delight, at the first appearance of such things; but their full merits are seldom understood, and consequently, are not often duly felt, until a certain degree of intercourse has placed us more on a footing of familiarity with them. In this respect, the analogy between the slight or intimate acquaintance we form with living persons, and that which we come to possess of the scenery and manners of foreign countries, is near enough to serve the purpose of illustration.

Although the men-of-war and their convoy sailed from Spithead on the 25th of March, they did not reach Madeira till the 19th of April. It is always more teasing to be delayed at the outset of a voyage than at any other stage of its course, just as it is mortifying and hurtful to be checked in the commencement of a profession. In both cases, the influence of early disappointment is apt enough to sour the rest of the career; while in the opposite or successful case, we often see the cheering effects of a few days' fair wind continue for months or years afterwards. Upon this occasion, we had a fine rattling easterly breeze for eight-and-forty hours after starting, which swept us all, dull sailers and good ones, merrily out of the British channel. This fair start is always a grand affair, whatever succeeds; for if the prevalent westerly w[illegible]d catches a ship before the channel is left well behind, she may be driven back to Plymouth or Falmouth, and all the agony of bills, news, leave-taking, and letters, has to be endured over again. Whereas, if she once gets the Lizard Light some fifty leagues astern of her, all these ferreting distractions may be considered at an end. A totally new world—the 'world of waters'—is now entered upon, far beyond the reach even of those long-armed persons, the 'gentlemen of the press,' or the startling sound of the postman's knock; that call which so often sets off the steadiest-going pulse at a gallop! No one, indeed, who has not tried the experiment, can have an idea of the extraordinary and delightful change which a few hours can bring about in this respect; or of the peculiar calm, which, when the ship is once fairly at sea, succeeds to the furious storms, or rather squalls, of the parting scene in port.

This applies especially to every ship going to a remote station; and the transition is rendered still more striking, if, beside her own complement of officers and men, she is the bearer of ambassadors, governors, generals, or indeed any other description or sex of passengers. A ship of war, as her name implies, is fitted almost exclusively for warlike purposes; and in order to justify this definition, and fulfil her pugnacious destiny, she is supplied with a certain number of guns, and a certain number of men to fight them, together with a proper quantity of stores, provisions, and other fitting munitions, to render efficient these implements of mischief. So exactly, indeed, is the space allotted to these several uses, that whenever any persons come on board, over and above the regular complement required to navigate and fight the ship, or when extra goods and chattels are to be stowed away, the inconvenience, which is never trifling, becomes at such times very great.

This is true, even when the passengers are naval officers, or sailors and marines destined for other ships; for the whole internal area being already taken up, in one way or another, some person, or some thing, has to move, in order to make room for the intruding body. This causes no small quantity of general growling; while the distracted first lieutenant is driven to his very wits' end to devise ways and means to reconcile the different interests of the various and too often conflicting parties committed to his charge. When the intruders are persons subject to naval discipline, the difficulty, though still considerable, is at its minimum, because these professional folks, whether they like it or not, know full well that they must submit not only to the general rules and regulations of the service, but to the particular ordinances or by-laws of the ship on board which they are ordered a passage. They form, in fact, for the time being, part and parcel of the crew,

are made to keep watch, and to perform any other duties which may be required of them. They are subject, likewise, to the ordinary 'wiggings,' or wholesome chastisements, by which the well-being of the naval service is kept up.

The case, unhappily, is very different when landsmen take a passage in a man-of-war. If they fall under the description of what Jack calls 'Knobs,' so much the worse; for, although men of rank are, in their own persons, among the least exacting of mortals, the most considerate of the feelings and wishes of others, generally speaking the most easily accommodated, and always grateful for sacrifices made with a view to their convenience, yet, unfortunately, these amiable qualities rarely descend to the satellites which accompany and revolve round the Knob in his orbit.

I remember once having orders to receive on board a very small brig of ten guns, a person of such high station, that, even if the whole cabin had been vacated, it would hardly have equalled in dimensions the dressing-room which His Excellency was in the habit of using. In this dilemma, and being extremely anxious to do all honour to so distinguished a guest, I consulted a friend who had long known him, and asked how the great man was likely to put up with the scanty accommodation and indifferent fare I could afford him.

"Put up with it!" cried the chief of the factory's friend (for this was far away in China), "why, the Baronet is such a good fellow, that if you thrust him into a cask, and feed him through the bung-hole, he will never complain!"

But no such latitude of complaisance is to be expected from the attendants and other followers of the 'Ta Yin.' On the contrary, they generally cause a monstrous deal of extra and needless trouble, fancy everything is to give way to their good will and pleasure, and, very unlike their principal, make a rule to be satisfied with nothing. They seem to think that His Majesty's naval service has been instituted for the sole purpose of giving ship-room to them and their endless boxes, barrels, hampers, and trunks. The articles of war expressly say, that "every person in or belonging to the fleet shall be subject to the laws and customs used at sea;" but what conceivable discipline can be supposed effective on the mind or body of one of those finest of fine men, the gentleman's gentleman, the all-accomplished valet of a colonial governor; a person not only better looking and better dressed than his master, but one who gives himself twenty times the airs, and even makes a merit of playing off his most refined graces upon the astonished and subdued first lieutenant? It is in vain for the poor constituted authority to say, "This will not do!" The cool assurance of the whole thing, indeed, goes so many degrees beyond the reach of ordinary interference, that we might almost imagine the objects of the mission would be entirely lost, were the ambassador's butler to be offended. Whatever comes of the public service, his high mightiness, at least, must be propitiated!

It accordingly affords considerable and undisguised satisfaction to the Premier, to see these delicate gentlemen horribly sea-sick, when the empire of blue water has once been gained; but in port, the misery and trouble caused by them, and their traps, and their assistants, and their sub-assistants, down an endless gradation of domestics, is not to be told. On any occasion of 'fitting foreign,' this is bad enough; but when the destination is India, the evil is aggravated manifold. People who have not visited distant countries, are very apt to fancy that out of England nothing is to be procured; and therefore it becomes requisite, they think, to lay in several years' stock of every possible article they can ever possibly want. Perhaps some moderation in these huge outfits might be introduced, if, by any contrivance, we could explain to the parties concerned, that the greater number of such extra articles of food, raiment, and equipage, are not only superfluous, but will almost necessarily be troublesome, unless (by good luck!) they are totally damaged and thrown overboard on the passage.

If, however, it be a hopeless task to make the Governor understand the inutility of carrying such loads of things, which are to be procured often at a less cost, and equally good, at the place he is going to, it is a still vainer hope to convince him that his regiment of followers will prove a great deal worse than useless, and that they will be a never-ending source of plague to him and to every one else on the voyage; or that, when he reaches his destination, they will all be superseded by a Tartar sort of incursion of sable spirits, under the name of dubashes, hookah burdars, gora wallas, and fifty others, the stupidest of whom will outmatch in usefulness the most crack footman in his train.

Nevertheless, in spite of all these and numberless other difficulties and obstructions, some private, some official, the good ship does, by a kind of miracle, at last get ready for sea, or what is called ready; though I verily believe, if she were to remain six months in port after the day on which she was reported ready to proceed, there would always be something to do with the dock-yard, the victualling-wharf, or the gun-wharf. The daily post, too, and that perennial epidemic the periodical press, lend their aid to worry the officers; while tavern-keepers, tailors, and washer-women, to say nothing of weeping friends and relatives, or broken-hearted connexions, co-operate to destroy all peace of mind, and make every one on board pray with the heartiest sincerity for a good strong puff of easterly wind, to waft him far beyond the reach of these multifarious distractions.

Oh, the joy! the relief unspeakable! of feeling one's self fairly under weigh, and of seeing the white cliffs of Old England sink fast in the north-eastern horizon right to windward! Let the concocters of romances and other imaginary tales say what they please of the joys of returning home; give me the happiness of a good departure, and a boundless world of untried enjoyments ahead. If a man be out of debt and out of love, or only moderately involved in either of these delicate predicaments; if he have youth and health and tolerable prospects, a good ship under his foot, a good officer above him, and good mess-mates to serve with, why need he wear and tear his feelings about those he leaves behind? Or rather, why need he grieve to part from those who are better pleased to see him vigorously doing his duty than idling in other people's way at home? Or wherefore should he sigh to quit those enjoyments in which he cannot honourably participate till he has earned his title to them by hardy service?

On the other hand, who is there so insensible as not to feel the deepest apprehension (very often, as I know by sad experience, almost devoid of a single drop of pleasure), on returning from a long and distant voyage? How can he tell in what condition he will now find the friends from whom he parted so long ago, and of whom he may, perhaps, not have heard a word for many a long season of anxiety? Is it not too probable that his busy fancy will conjure up many more images of death and sickness, of losses and sorrows, than it can paint pictures of health, good fortune, and happiness? And will it ever happen, if the interval of absence have been long, that some of these gloomy forebodings will not be realised? May it not prove but too often the case, that those who, from being the dearest to us, we had ingeniously and fondly exempted from the fatal doom, are its first victims? Indeed, I have on these occasions been grieved and irritated at myself for canvassing beforehand, in my own mind, and in spite of every effort to change the current of my thoughts, which of all the friends in whom I was interested I could consent to lose with the least regret! And when the pile of accumulated *letters* is first placed in our hands after a voyage, with what sickening eagerness do we not turn from the superscription to discover the colour of the seal?

It happened once to me to be nearly fifteen months without receiving a single line from home, or seeing an English newspaper. On reaching the port of rendezvous, I found that as the ship I commanded was the only man-of-war in the harbour, there devolved upon me an immense load of official business requiring immediate and careful attention. All this I learned on my way to the consul's office, where a huge budget of letters was delivered to me. My first impulse, naturally, was to tear away the envelopes, and dive into the secrets of these domestic dispatches; but I paused on detecting several ominous-looking patches of black wax, and, thrusting them all into a drawer, did not open one till next day. Officially considered, it was well I imposed this restraint upon my curiosity; for the fatal news these letters contained must have seriously interfered with the exclusive professional attention which the nature of the service required me to bestow upon various public matters admitting of no delay; whereas, in regard to the private intelligence, a single day, added to so many months, signified nothing.

After leaving Spithead, our two days of fair wind were enough to take us clear of the channel, and well off the bank of soundings, far beyond the danger of return. A tolerable spell of bad weather then came on, which in one sense was of essential service, by contributing greatly to assist the first lieutenant's arrangements, though it discomfited most grievously the apple-pie order of those disturbers of his peace, the dandified, shore-going, long-coated gentry before alluded to, and whom the sailors, in their coarse but graphic vocabulary, call 'dog robbers,' from their intercepting the broken meat on its way to the kennel from their master's table. Our gale of wind, indeed, was no gale to speak of; but as the sea rose, and a heavy press of canvas laid the creaking old barky well over on her broadside, many of the beautifully piled boxes, the well-packed portmanteaus, the polished dressing-cases and writing-desks, the frail glass, crockery, and other finery, fetched way, and went rattling, smash! dash! right into the lee scuppers. Along with these dislodged goods and chattels went down, from time to time, several of the astonished proprietors of the half-ruined property, partly actuated by the praiseworthy but vain hope of arresting the course of gravitation and the momentum of a good heavy sea, and partly without the power of choice. In the next instant, the great bulk of these materials were jerked back again, nearly to their original situation, by that peculiar movement, so trying to unpractised nerves, called a lurch to windward. To unaccustomed ears, the sounds on this occasion lead one to suppose the ship is going to pieces; while the cries for help from the broken-shinned, sea-sick landsmen, the bawling for cleats and lashings from the mate of the decks, the thumping of hammers, and the loud laugh of the light-hearted middies, enchanted with the uproar, make a fine concert. The sedative effect of two or three hours of this work exceeds fresh-water belief; so that in a day or two, Messrs. Neptune, Boreas, First Lieutenant, and Co., have re-established their legitimate authority so completely, that neither butler, cook, gentleman's gentleman, nor any other passenger, ever afterwards ventures to indulge in those liberties which, at first coming on board, he fancied might be taken with impunity.

Our amiable guest, indeed, the late Sir Evan Nepean, governor of Bombay, I must do him the justice to say, was the least troublesome of passengers. The rest of our party, too, though squeezed together in a manner every way different from their usual habits, made themselves so agreeable, not only by their conversation and accommodating manners, but by their constant desire to compensate to us for the derangement which their intrusion, as they were pleased to call it, made in our comforts, that we were heartily sorry to part with them.

Of Madeira, enough, in all conscience, has already been written; so that I shall content myself with mentioning, that we there fell in with a very intelligent person, an Italian count, who had been travelling in France, Spain, and in both the Americas. What he said of South America was pronounced by us all to be utterly absurd, and so full of prejudice as to be worth nothing. "The people of those countries," he remarked, "are now (1812) doing themselves nothing but mischief; and, generally speaking, the South American insurgents have but a few faint notions of liberty; so that, if they succeed in gaining their independence, they will speedily set about cutting one another's throats; for all they know about freedom, or about political principles, is drawn from the worst parts of the French revolution."

For my own part, I feel called upon, in some measure, to record these judicious observations, from having myself, ten years afterwards, though with the advantage of a still more extensive range of observation than this traveller, taken a very different view of the subject, but one which, I am sorry to say, was not nearly so correct. I certainly was deceived, by what I saw in South America, into a belief that the new states might enjoy more political happiness, and be less subjected to the caprice of despotic authority, when self-governed, as it is called, than when under the admi-

nistration of the mother country, bad as that was. I am now, however, obliged to acknowledge, and I make the recantation with sorrow, that the change has turned out greatly for the worse, inasmuch as the colonists have substituted for the despotic authority of one head the far deeper and more irremediable curse, the tyranny of that many-headed monster, the populace. They have likewise practically shown, on a scale sufficiently extensive and varied to satisfy every reasonable observer, that mere animal liberty, or the uncontrolled power of adopting, and putting into nominal action, a liberal form of government, however complete in theory, contributes scarcely anything to the establishment of genuine freedom. The example, at all events, is most wholesome, from its helping to show, that revolutions, whether bloody or otherwise, if made suddenly, will seldom place things in as favourable a position as they occupied before the convulsion. The practical inference from these facts and reasonings seems to be, that any political ameliorations, even of abuses really felt to be such, ought always to be made by very slow, and almost imperceptible degrees. It is perhaps even true, that the excellence and eventual utility of all such variations in the machinery of an established constitution are pretty safely measured by their apparent slowness ; and if so, there is probably no paradox in asserting, that when the alteration of any old political institution is altogether unseen by the casual observer, its constitution may really be undergoing the very maximum of beneficial modification.

The concluding part of the count's prophetical view is as follows, and I give it with pleasure, for two reasons ; first, because it is yet unaccomplished ; and, secondly, because it exactly coincides with my own views. "Whether," said he, "the South Americans are to form a connexion with Spain or not they must, in order to their having the least chance of enjoying rational civil liberty, come ultimately under the monarchical form of government, and abandon, as totally unsuited to them, and to the objects in view, those republican institutions, at the establishment of which they are now aiming."

CHAPTER VI.

THE TROPICAL REGIONS AT SEA.

THERE sailed along with us in the Volage, from Spithead, the Princess Caroline 74, and the Theban frigate, to aid in protecting a fleet of the following ships of the East India Company :—the Elphinstone, Wexford, Cirencester, Marquess of Huntly, Bombay Castle, and Alnwick Castle, all for China direct. As these ships were of the largest class, well manned, well commanded, and were likewise pretty well armed, and got up to look like men-of-war, our force had not only an imposing aspect, but, in the event of coming in contact with an enemy, even in considerable strength, we should either have beaten him outright, or baffled him by crippling his spars in such a way as to prevent his interrupting our voyage.

There is one signal instance on record in which a fleet of East India Company's ships, unassisted by any professed men-of-war, actually beat off a French squadron of very powerful vessels. These striking incidents peeping out from time to time, show what is called the true blood of the animal, and are extremely valuable, from proving how essential it is that an officer in command should 'Never say die while there is a shot in the locker!' a pithy old phrase, which will apply to many situations in life, civil as well as military. Had the gallant and judicious East India commander alluded to, Sir Nathaniel Dance, cried out, 'I die!' when the French Admiral Linois, and his squadron, consisting of the Marengo, a line-of-battle ship of 84 guns, and the Belle Poule and Semillante frigates, each of 44, bore down on the China fleet, not less than six millions of English property, and some of the noblest trading ships that float on the ocean, must have been carried into the Isle of France.

This memorable affair took place near Pulo Aor, in the China seas, and by a very interesting, and no doubt useful coincidence, on the 14th of February, 1804, the seventh anniversary of the glorious action off Cape St. Vincent. Had the enemy only known the real force of his opponents, which he most certainly ought to have found out before he quitted them, the bold front these ships put forward might indeed have served them nothing. A less resolute man than Captain Dance might have said, this good fortune was hardly to be calculated upon ; but it is the duty of a commander, at all times and under all circumstances, to afford himself every possible chance, and never to give up while there is one of these chances left.

A useful chapter in naval history and tactics could be written on the defence of convoys, by which it might perhaps be made manifest, that a determined bearing, accompanied by a certain degree of force, and a vigorous resolution to exert that force to the utmost, would, in most cases, save the greater part of the convoy, even against powerful odds. In the well-known instance of the sacrifice of his ship, in a contest in which he was from the first sure to be overpowered, Captain Richard Budd Vincent gained sufficient time for most of his flock of merchant-ships to escape.

This gallant officer, in February 1805, in the Arrow, of 18 twenty-four pounders, ably supported by Captain Arthur Farquhar, in the Acheron bomb, carrying not half that number, actually engaged two large French frigates, mounting in all 90 guns and 1300 men, while the English force was only 26 guns and 90 men. The damage and delay caused to the enemy by this spirited resistance enabled the convoy to disperse, and all to get off but three, out of thirty-two. The English ships did not strike till they were so much cut up that one sunk immediately afterwards, and the other was burned by the captors as useless.

On the occasion of our voyage in 1812, however, the fortitude and skill of our East India ships were put to no such proof, as our most interesting evolutions were confined to the interchange of good dinners ; for your Indiamen know as well how to eat, drink, and be merry, as to fight, if need be. Their nominal, and indeed their chief business, is to trade ; but their trading is a widely different thing from that of the ordinary merchant service. The East India Company's officers are bred up in many respects like naval men ; and, as they are taught to act, they learn to feel, in the same manner. Being sprung from as good a

stock as the officers of the brother-service of the Navy, they possess a kindred gentlemanlike spirit, and are in every respect, as far as their means go, perfectly suitable allies in battle. I allude chiefly to their warlike equipments ; but in almost everything else they are also essentially the same, save in the circumstance of actual trafficking. Unfortunately, manage it as we will, the habit of buying and selling goods must have a tendency, in spite of his best exertions, to detach an officer's thoughts from those high and delicate refinements which constitute the characteristic distinction between the art of war and the art of gain. Accordingly, the two things, when joined together, make rather an agreeable than a profitable mixture. No men, in any service, fight better than the officers of the East India Company's ships, when fairly brought to the scratch ; but it is their chief business, or, we may rather call it, their bounden duty, as much as possible to avoid action ; and their habits leading them to seek protection from others, rather than to reckon on their own strength, or to court action for its own sake, the wholesome spirit of pugnacity is not duly cherished. On the other hand, as their trading concerns are entangled by these nautico-military arrangements, and their thoughts always engaged, more or less, with the crabbed intricacies of discipline, and the maintenance of that sort of man-of-war state and show which are often thought to be amongst the best proofs of good order, their mercantile bargains, both in respect to sales and to purchases, are, I fear, none of the best for themselves, poor fellows !

In fine weather there is naturally much agreeable intercourse between the different ships in such a fleet as ours ; for East India Company's folks, whether of the land or the sea service, understand right well the jolly art of good cheer wherever they go ; be it on terra firma, or on the high seas, bivouacking on the lofty Himalayas, or feasting in the bungaloes of the flat Delta of the Ganges, it is all one to them. So that during our whole voyage, there scarcely occurred a day on which, in the course of the morning, if the sea were tolerably smooth, and the wind not too strong, and the weather otherwise agreeable, the dinner invitation signal was not displayed from the commodore, or from some of his flock. When there was a breeze, and the ships were making way through the water, some technical address was necessary to avoid delay. This will easily be understood, without going into minute details, when it is remembered, that there must always in a convoy be found certain ships which sail worse than others, and that, although these tubs, as they are most deservedly called, crowd all their canvas, the rest are obliged to shorten sail in order to keep them company ; as Lightfoot, in the fairy tale, was obliged to tie his feet in the race. If it be the commodore who gives the dinner, he either heaves to, while the boats of the several captains come on board, or he edges down to the different ships in succession, passes them at the distance of a quarter of a cable's length, picks up his guests, and resumes his station a-head, or to windward, or wherever it may suit him to place himself so as best to guard his charge. If any of the fast sailers have occasion to heave to, either before or after dinner, to lower down or to hoist up the boat which carries the captain backwards and forwards to the ship in which the entertainment is given, and in consequence of this detention any way has been lost, that ship has only to set a little more sail that she may shoot ahead, and regain her position in the line.

The unfortunate bad sailers of all fleets or convoys that ever swam, as may well be supposed, are daily and hourly execrated in every note of the gamut ; and it must be owned, that the detention they cause, when a fine fresh breeze is blowing, is excessively provoking to all the rest, and mortifying to themselves. Sometimes the progress of one haystack of a vessel is so slow that a fast-sailing ship is directed to take her in tow, and fairly lug her along. As this troublesome operation requires for its proper execution no small degree of nautical knowledge, as well as dexterity, and must be performed in the face of the whole squadron, it is always exposed to much sharp criticism. The celerity with which sail is set, or taken in, by the respective ships, or the skill with which broken spars are shifted, likewise furnish such abundant scope for technical table-talk, that there is seldom any want of topic in the convoy. Sailors, indeed, are about as restless as the element on which they float ; and their hands are generally kept pretty full by the necessity of studying the fluctuating circumstances of wind and weather, together with the due attention to what is properly called the navigation, or that branch of their art which consists in discovering the ship's place on the globe, and shaping the course to be steered after the exact position has been determined.

These, and various other occupations not now touched upon, served to give a high degree of interest to this Indian voyage, which, to most of us, was the first in its way, and filled up our time, as we sailed along with a flowing sheet over the broad Atlantic, much more completely and agreeably than can be well conceived. The mere circumstance of having to pass successively and quickly through a number of different climates, first in the order of increasing warmth, and then in the reverse order of increasing cold, was of itself most striking. The change of latitude being the chief cause of these phenomena, a succession of astronomical variations became necessarily attendant upon the progress of the voyage ; and although all of these were easily explained by reasonings which every one on board was accustomed to admit as sound, yet the actual, practical exhibition, as it may be termed, of the truths of astronomical science failed not to strike the unfamiliarised imagination as both wonderful and beautiful.

When we sailed from England the weather was very cold, raw, and uncomfortable ; and although, fortunately, we had a couple of days' fair wind at starting, we were met in the very chops of the channel by hard-hearted southerly and south-westerly winds, which tried our patience sorely. On the evening of the tenth day we caught a glimpse of the north coast of Spain ; and the rugged shore of Galicia was the last which most of us saw of Europe for many years. It was not till after a fortnight's hard struggling against these tiresome south-westers that we anchored in Funchal Roads, Madeira, having by the way dropped several of our convoy. These stray sheep came in during the few days we remained to refresh ourselves at this most charming of resting-places.

After nearly a week's enjoyment, we proceeded on our course to the southward, and within three days came in sight of Palma, the most northern of the Canary Island group. It was thirty miles distant in the south-east quarter. Teneriffe, the sea 'monarch of mountains,' lay too far off for us to perceive even his 'diadem of snow,' which at that season (April), I presume, he always wears. Some years after the period in question, when I paid him a visit, in the month of August, the very tip-top was bare, and the thermometer at 70°.

Under more favourable circumstances, we might possibly have seen Teneriffe from the Volage, for our distance was not above a hundred miles. This, however, it must be owned, is a long way to see the land, unless it form a continuous ridge of great elevation, like the Andes; and even then, to be distinguished well, it requires to be interposed between a bright sky and the ship. At daybreak, and for about half an hour before sunrise, if the weather be clear, even sharp peaks, like the cone of Teneriffe, may be seen with a degree of distinctness which is very remarkable, when viewed from the distance of a hundred miles and upwards, as I have several times experienced when navigating in the Pacific. But when the full splendour of the sun's light begins to fill the air, these gigantic forms gradually fade away amongst the clouds, or melt into the sky, even when no clouds are visible. I have likewise been told, that in sailing directly away from Teneriffe (or other high insulated peaks), and keeping the eye pretty constantly fixed in the proper direction, it may be retained in sight at much greater distance than it can be discovered on approaching. I am disposed to consider this very probable, but have never had a good opportunity of trying the experiment.

It was late in April, as we were stealing slowly past these distant Canary Islands, when the first real puff of the Trade-wind caught our sleeping sails, and made the braces, haulyards, and all the other ropes connected with the yards, crack again. This breeze, by giving us a foretaste of what we were to enjoy for upwards of a thousand leagues across the torrid zone a-head of us, served more effectually to detach our thoughts from European interests than anything which had occurred since our leaving England. At the very moment, however, when we were chuckling at this disentanglement of our feelings from domestic anxieties, and all the varied agitation of home concerns, we observed a ship crossing our path at some distance. Signal being made to chase, we instantly darted off from the convoy to examine the stranger, who proved to be an English ship from Lisbon. We hailed, and asked, "What news?"

"Badajoz has fallen," replied the other, "after a terrible siege."

This was received with a general buzz of joyous congratulation along the decks. In answer to further questions, we were told of some three or four thousand men killed and wounded in the trenches and breach. Then, indeed, the glorious intelligence was greeted by three jolly huzzas from every ship in the convoy!

Nothing so startling as this occurred to us again; but the serenity of our thoughts was in some degree interrupted, a few days afterwards, by the north-easterly Trade-wind dying away, and a gentle south-wester springing up in its place. This occurred in latitude 25½° N., where, according to our inexperienced conception of these singular winds, we ought to have found a regular breeze from the very opposite quarter! Nor was it till long afterwards that I learned how much the force and direction of the Trade-winds are liable to modification by the particular position which the sun occupies in the heavens; or how far the rotatory motion of the earth, combined with the power which the sun possesses of heating certain portions of the circumambient air, are the regulating causes of the Trades, Monsoons, and, indeed, of all the other winds by which we are driven about. It is by no means an easy problem in meteorology to show how these causes act in every case; and perhaps it is one which will never be so fully solved as to admit of very popular enunciation applicable to all climates. In the most important and useful class of these aërial currents, called, par excellence, and with so much picturesque truth, 'the Trade-winds,' the explanation is not difficult. But before entering on this curious and copious theme, I feel anxious to carry our convoy fairly across the tropical regions; after which an account of the Trades will be better understood.

I have just mentioned that the changes of temperature, on a voyage to India, are most remarkable. We set sail, for instance, in the month of March, when it was bitterly cold in England; then we came off the coast of Spain, where it was a little more moderate; next to Madeira, which is always agreeable. Then we passed the Canaries; after which we sailed over the tropic of Cancer, and got well toasted in the torrid zone; steered down upon the equinoctial line, passed the tropic of Capricorn, and again became conscious of the weakened influence of the sun; till, at length, off the Cape of Good Hope, we were once more nipped with the cold. Anon, having rounded the south point of Africa, we put our heads towards the line, and a second time, within a few weeks, emerged from the depth of winter into the height of summer.

The proximate cause of all these vicissitudes was, of course, our approach towards and removal from the direct influence of the great source of light and heat. At one time, the sun, even at noon, was seen creeping stealthily along, low down in the horizon, at another his jolly countenance was blazing away right overhead. On the 5th of May, when our latitude was 17½° N., the sun's declination was 16¼° N., his centre being only one degree from our zenith: shadows we had none, any more than the unhappy wretch in the wild German story, who, for a punishment, was deprived of this honourable accompaniment. On that day we saw St. Antonio, the north-westernmost of the Cape de Verde Islands, the summit of which is about seven thousand feet above the sea.

On the next day I well remember going on deck with a certain flutter of spirits, to see, for the first time in my life, the sun to the northward, and moving through the heavens from right to left, instead of from left to right. No one doubts that the earth is round; yet these conspicuous and actual proofs of its rotundity always amuse the fancy, and frequently interest the judgment, almost as much as if they were unexpected. The gradual rise, night after night, of new stars and new con-

stellations, belongs to a still higher order of curiosity; for it not merely places well-known objects in strange positions, but brings totally new subjects of contemplation before our eyes, and leads us to feel, perhaps more strongly than upon any other occasion, the full gratification which novelty on the grandest scale is capable of producing. I shall never forget the impatience with which I have often watched the approach of darkness after a long day's run to the south, knowing that I, in a few moments, was to discover celestial phenomena heretofore concealed from my view.

After slanting through the north-east Trade-wind, we reached that well-known but troublesome stage in the voyage, so difficult to get over, called the Variables. This region has acquired its title from the regular Trades not being found there, but in their place unsteady breezes, long calms, heavy squalls, and sometimes smart winds from the southward and south westward. These Variables, which sorely perplex all mariners, even those of most experience, while they drive young navigators almost out of their senses, are not less under the dominion of the causes which regulate those great perennial breezes the Trades, blowing to the northward and southward of them. Their laws, however, are not quite so readily understood, and consequently are not so easily allowed for in the practice of navigation. I have even seen people as greatly provoked with their occurrence, as if the course of nature had been intermitted for the express purpose of bothering them. Such impatient voyagers will not condescend to recollect, that their own confined observation, or shallow knowledge of the facts, is rather more likely to be the cause of their disappointment, than that dame Nature should have halted in her operations merely to vex their worships. On the other hand, many persons, besides navigators, misled by the seduction of names, rush headlong into very unsubstantial generalisations; and, upon the strength of a few unconnected facts, lay down what they call laws of nature, which they are mightily astonished to find will not always square with actual observation. Such reasoners, instead of being delighted with new facts, are vexed to meet with exceptions, as they call them, and are very slow to confess that the error lies with themselves. Still less are they willing to allow, that, if they had studied the subject more attentively, they might have profited by these very exceptions, and advanced their voyage, instead of retarding it. There seems, indeed, to be a strange propensity in the human mind, at one time to despise authority, and at another to yield too implicitly to its assertions; at one time to guess at the secrets of nature, without inquiring what others have done; and at another to relinquish all independent judgment, and assume the facts to be as stated, without investigating the value of the authority on which they rest, or seeking to know whether the recorded instances be applicable or not to the case in hand.

When we actually encounter, on the spot, and for the first time, a crowd of new circumstances, of which, previously, we have only known the names, or have merely heard them described by others, we feel so much confused and bewildered, that we fly eagerly to the nearest authority to help us out of the scrape. It generally happens, in these cases, that the reference does not prove very satisfactory, because the actual circumstances with which we are engaged are rarely similar in all their bearings to those with which we compare them; and when this is not the case, the blindfold method of proceeding in the beaten path is very apt to mislead.

As an illustration of this kind of deception, it may be stated, that navigators, whose actual experience has not extended to the tropical regions, are very apt, in poring over the voyages of others, to acquire, insensibly, a very confident notion that each of the great Trade-winds blowing on different sides of the Line (the North-east and the South-east by name), are quite steady in their direction; and that, in the equatorial interval which lies between them, only calms and light winds are to be found. Moreover, inexperienced persons generally believe this interval to be equally divided by the equator, and that both the breadth and the position of this calm region continue unchanged throughout the whole year. Now, here are four important mistakes,—important both in a scientific and in a practical point of view. For, 1st, Not calms and squalls alone, but occasionally fresh and steady winds, are found between the Trades; 2dly, The belt called the Variables is by no means equally divided by the equator; neither, 3dly, is that belt stationary in its position; nor, 4thly, is it uniform in its breadth. It will thence be easily understood, even by a person who has never quitted one of the midland counties in England, and to whom the ocean is an unseen wonder, that a new-comer to the tropical regions, his head loaded with these false views, will be very apt to mistake his own ignorance for the caprice of Nature, and perhaps call out, as I once heard a man do, in all the agony of impatience caused by a protracted head-wind,—"Now, this is really scandalous usage of the clerk of the weather-office!" The scandal, however, lay not so much with the clerk's usage as with his own limited knowledge; for if, at the very time of his imprecation, instead of abusing the foul wind, and keeping his yards braced sharp up, and making his sails stand like a board, the grumbler had known how to take advantage of it, and had kept away two or three points, set his fore-topmast studding-sail, and flanked across or through the breeze which he had in vain tried to beat against, he might not only have saved his temper, but have made his passage in half the time.

Navigation, after all, probably more than most other pursuits, requires, for its right performance, a constant mixture of theory and practice. The purely practical man, if his experience be extensive, and his voyages be repeatedly made over the same ground, will unquestionably have an advantage over the purely theoretical navigator. There is no necessity, however, that speculation and experience should be either disjoined, or combined in equal portions. A small chain of sound reasoning will serve to arrange and bind together a large pile of properly observed details. Actual facts form the rude materials of our professional knowledge; the skill of the mathematician supplies the theory, by direction of which the edifice is built up. In ordinary navigation, a comparatively limited allowance of mathematics, and an acquaintance with the more general principles of astronomy, furnish what may be termed the plan and

elevation of our structure ; but experience alone can teach us how to apply these designs to useful account.

I am not sure that, in the whole range of this extensive subject, there could be picked out an instance more in point to what has just been said, than these interesting phenomena of the Trade-winds, which, if I mistake not, possess considerable interest to all classes of persons, whether professional or otherwise. To sailors of every age and rank, and especially to naval officers, an acquaintance with the laws which regulate these extraordinary aërial currents must be of great importance. For a commander may be ordered, at a moment's warning, either to carry his own ship, or to lead a squadron, or to guard a convoy, from the northern to the southern hemisphere, or perhaps from the West to the East Indies. If, however, he have not previously made a tropical voyage or two, or have not studied the subject in its genuine theoretical spirit, as well as in the log-books of his predecessors, he may expect to find himself most wofully embarrassed, both on entering and on leaving the Trades.

A captain of a man-of-war in charge of a convoy of Indian ships, it is true, may, at any time, consult the experienced commanders of the ships under his orders as to the best method of making the passage, generally ; or he may call them on board on reaching the Variables, to have their opinion, and, if he pleases, take their advice as to the quickest method of getting over this difficult stage in the journey. But I think it will occur to every officer, that in such a proceeding, however necessary it may sometimes be for the advancement of the public service, there must be a certain loss of dignity ; and with it, some relinquishment of that authority which all experience shows is essential to the proper exercise of command.

Neither officers nor men throughout any fleet ever put forth their whole strength, unless they have the fullest confidence in the person placed at their head. On the other hand, if their confidence in their leader be complete, they fling their whole souls and bodies into the effort, and, under the inspiring influence of unbounded faith, often perform deeds which are equally surprising to themselves and to others. We all know how well this principle worked on the great scale in fleets under Nelson, and, in a smaller degree, but in a spirit hardly less remarkable, on board single ships under Lord Cochrane.

Without exhausting this branch of the question, it must be evident to every one, that the exact knowledge required for getting quickly over the more difficult parts of an Indian voyage, may often prove of the utmost consequence in a national point of view. Suppose, for instance, a war breaks out unexpectedly between France and England, and two frigates, equally good sailers, are despatched, by the countries respectively, to spread the news in the Eastern hemisphere. Conceive them to start simultaneously, one from Cherbourg, the other from Plymouth ; let them both reach the edge of the Variables together, and also lose the north-east Trade-wind on the same day. So far, two equally good officers will probably run abreast of one another. But if one of the captains, without being personally acquainted with the numerous varieties which occur in those low latitudes, has yet a sound knowledge of the general laws by which the fluctuations in the winds are regulated, while the other has merely read about them in log-books, and has no theoretical key to help him to unlock the secrets of the perplexing anomalies he will inevitably encounter, the chances surely are, that the career of the two ships will become from that hour essentially different. If, to the theoretical knowledge which I have supposed one of the officers to possess, he adds even a slight personal acquaintance with the facts, from having studied them on a former voyage, his advantage over his rival will be still greater. At all events, that frigate commanded by the officer possessed of most philosophical knowledge of the causes which put the air in motion, would, in all probability, double the Cape many days, perhaps weeks before the other, and thus be enabled to scatter the important intelligence over the whole Indian ocean in time to prevent great disasters ; or, by striking the first blow, to accomplish active warlike purposes of the highest importance to his country.

Independently of all such public objects concerned in these inquiries, which give them a degree of professional importance, and almost render their study a part of every officer's duty, there appears to exist a very general interest in the Trade-winds, sufficiently strong to engage the attention even of unprofessional persons when the subject is placed intelligibly before them. These vast currents of air, which sweep round and round the globe in huge strips of more than twelve hundred miles in width, are in a manner forced, more or less, on every one's notice, from contributing essentially to that boundless interchange of the productions of distant regions by which modern times are so agreeably distinguished from the old.

The great Monsoons, again, of the Indian and China oceans play almost as important a part in this grand nautical drama along the coasts of those remote countries. All these great phenomena, and every one of their numerous minor varieties, will be found, upon a little inquiry, to obey precisely the same laws as their less fluctuating brethren the mighty Trades. That theory, indeed, would be but a shabby one which did not include both ; and hence, it may be useful to suggest to my young friends, springs one of the chief delights of science when its study is conducted in a proper spirit. If the pursuit of truth be engaged in with sincerity, phenomena apparently the most opposite in character, for example, winds in different parts of the earth, but in the same latitude, blowing in totally different directions at the same season of the year, will always prove in the end illustrative of one another, and of their common theory.

CHAPTER VII.

THE TRADE-WINDS.

THERE are few things more curious in the history of human knowledge than the establishment of extensive errors as to matters of fact, and the perverse tenacity with which they retain their hold on the public mind. In some cases it would almost seem that the pleasure which springs from genuine philosophical inquiry is subordinate to that which arises from the indolent process of

taking *things* for granted. This, among numerous other instances, applies peculiarly to the phenomena of the Trade-winds, respecting which many erroneous ideas are generally entertained. To professional men these fallacies are calculated to prove extremely mischievous; while even to persons not directly connected with the sea, the existence of error may often be injurious. And although it is not very easy to explain these things in a popular way, I shall attempt, in language as little technical as possible, to give a description of the facts as they really are found to exist by those who have visited the regions where the phenomena prevail. If, however, after perusing it, the general reader, as he is pleasantly called, shall relapse into his original heresy, I shall still hope that my young nautical friends will keep a firmer hold of truths, which may one day very essentially aid them in their professional career: and as it is for their use chiefly that this chapter is written, I shall make no apologies either for its length or its elementary nature.

A correct, and, at the same time, an extensive, knowledge of all the facts connected with the Trade-winds, is to be acquired, I suspect, only by personal experience. But the main characteristics may easily be described; and these, when viewed side by side with such theoretical explanations as are agreeable to physical laws, which have been found applicable to all cases, may serve to enable even inexperienced navigators to predict pretty nearly, and often with the greatest practical advantage, what winds they are likely to meet with.

The great belt of the earth's surface, nearly three thousand miles in width, lying between the tropics (from 23½° north to 23½° south latitude), is the chief region of the Trade-winds; though in some parts of the world they extend to the latitude of 28° both north and south of the equator; while at other places well within the tropics, and even close to the line, totally different winds prevail. It is only in the open parts of the Pacific and Atlantic oceans that the true Trade-winds blow. In the Indian and China seas, and in many other portions of the great tropical belt, periodical winds, called Monsoons, are found. These shifting Trades exact the closest study from the practical navigator, in consequence of their extensive variety and seeming complication. But they are not less deserving the attention of merely curious inquirers, from the beautiful manner in which these modifications of the regular breezes obey the same general laws which direct the grand phenomena of the Trades. Indeed, the most extensive observation serves only to link the whole into one harmonious chain or series of explanations, equally delightful to the philosopher, useful to seamen, and grateful, we may suppose, to every right mind in every station, from exhibiting one of the grandest specimens of the uniformity and exquisite adaptation of Nature, even in those departments, miscalled 'inconstant,' where she is supposed to be most capricious.

The only general assertion perhaps that can safely be made with respect to the Trade-winds is, that they blow, more or less, from the eastern half of the compass towards the western. On the north side of the equator, the north-east Trade-wind blows; and on the south side, the south-east Trade-wind. These two names have undoubtedly contributed to mystify the subject by naturally suggesting to the imagination currents of air blowing respectively from the north-east and the south-east, or at an angle of 45° with the meridian. And I have even seen sailors (old sailors too) quite surprised, and rather provoked, when they have encountered very different winds in those parts of their voyage, where, being misled by the force of names alone, they had taught themselves to expect a regular breeze from a particular quarter. But, in point of fact, the Trade-winds do very seldom blow directly from north-east and south-east; neither are they uniform in their direction on the same spot at different seasons of the year, nor is their strength uniform from month to month. I may add, that the equatorial limits, or bounding lines, of the Trades are not steadily confined to the same latitude. In short, so far from these winds being perfectly fixed in direction, force, and position, as most people on shore, and too many sailors, imagine, they are subject to very considerable mutations, dependent on the position of the sun. Their vast importance in commerce need only be mentioned; yet it is also well to recollect, that their nautical value, as well as philosophical curiosity, turns mainly on their uniformity, which in spite of all the fluctuations alluded to, gives them a very distinctive character.

In Dr. Young's chart of the winds, published in his Natural Philosophy, plates XLII. and XLIII., vol. i., the Trade-winds are represented as blowing nearly from the north-east and south-east till they approach the equator, when they are made to take a graceful bend, and flow along in lines parallel to the equinoctial line. Under the general head of Winds, vol. ii., p. 455, Dr. Young states, from Robertson, that "near the equator the Trade blows from due east." This is very wide of the truth, as I shall presently show, and also endeavour to explain why.

Hadley, in a valuable paper on the "Cause of the general Trade-winds," in the Philosophical Transactions for 1735, falls into similar errors in stating some of the facts; which is the more curious, since his theory is unquestionably the true one. He states that "these winds, as they come nearer the equator, will become stronger, and more and more easterly, and be due east at the equator itself, according to experience *."

Where Hadley obtained his 'experience' he does not tell; but certain it is, that no sailor who ever crossed the equinoctial line could possibly have furnished him with two of his principal assertions in the above sentence. In the first place, the Trades are not strongest near the equator; and in the next, when they reach that district they never blow along it, or in a parallel direction, but almost always at right angles to it.

I have quoted these two high authorities, though they are decidedly in error, in order to warn young sailors not to be taken in, as I myself have been more than once, by too confident theoretical assertions, made obviously in perfectly good faith, and under a belief of their accordance with the facts; whereas the statements may merely have agreed with their authors' theories, or, to speak more properly, with what they conceived these theories would lead to. Nothing can be further from my intention than to disparage the

* Philosophical Transactions abridged, vol. viii. p. 21.

speculations of philosophers who, without quitting their closets, so often extend the glorious lights of science to the remotest corners of the globe, and, by generalising the observed facts of mere practical men, add ten-fold value to their researches.

In this spirit of mutual instruction, it is well worthy of remark, that, upon a careful consideration of the views of the writers above alluded to, the only circumstances inconsistent with the theory are those particular points in their theory which do not square with observation. This is exactly what we should expect of a sound hypothesis. An explanation that will fit equally well a true and a false statement of the facts, is evidently worth nothing: but if a theory, when placed side by side with the phenomena, is found to have only one or two objections to its universal application; and if it shall appear, upon further inquiry, that these objections vanish when more correct knowledge is obtained, the explanation is entitled, on the score of good faith, even to higher respect than if, in the first instance, it had been twisted so as to fit all the supposed circumstances.

It will contribute, I think, to facilitate a right apprehension of the various and beautiful phenomena of the Trade-winds, to give, first, the theory of Hadley above alluded to, and then to describe the actual facts, as sailors find them when making a voyage. It may be useful to mention that this very theory was suggested to my own mind by a long personal acquaintance with the subject, some years before I was aware that Hadley had written on it, and after I had found all the other theories which I had seen wholly inadequate to explain the phenomena.

If the earth had no motion on its axis, but were surrounded as at present with an atmosphere, and if the sun moved round and round it exactly above the equator, without varying his declination, the following effects would ensue: That portion of the earth lying, say thirty degrees, on each side of the equator, being more exposed to the action of the sun than those further from it, would become much warmer; while the superincumbent air, being greatly heated by the contact, would expand, or become specifically lighter, and would consequently rise. The adjacent air, both on the north and south, being cooler, and, of course, heavier, would rush in to supply the place of the heated air. This air coming from the regions beyond the tropics would, in its turn, be heated on reaching the warmer equatorial regions, and rise, giving place to a fresh supply, which, it is easy to see, must be furnished by the descent of that portion of air formerly heated at the equator, raised into the cold regions of the sky, and forced into a regular circuit by fresh elevations of heated air. All these, and many other interesting results, are clearly developed in Daniell's Meteorological Essays, a book which every one at all interested in such inquiries will find it advantageous to study. The first edition of this work was published in 1823, some years after these speculations had been forced upon my notice by a long course of service between the tropics. In the Appendix to the second edition, 1827, Mr. Daniell did me the honour to publish a letter which I wrote to him on the Trade-winds, illustrative, as he thought, of his own doctrines.

It will be understood, that, as long as we imagine the globe at rest while this circulation is going on, the course of the lower air along the surface would be directly towards the equator, from due north in one hemisphere, and from due south in the other; while in the upper regions the currents would follow the opposite directions, and stream towards the poles. But the instant we conceive the earth put into rotatory motion from west to east, a change would take place in the course of these aërial currents, both above and below. It must be recollected that a volume of air, when once put in motion, will move on, like any other body, by the mere force of its own momentum, till that motion is destroyed by its friction against the substances along or through which it is impelled. Any one who has observed the ring of smoke sometimes projected from the mouth of a cannon, will be sensible that this is true. The familiar experiment, also, of blowing out a candle by means of the air forced from the barrel of an uncharged fowling-piece, on firing at its touch-hole one of the copper priming-caps now in use, affords a popular illustration of the fact of a mass of air retaining its motion for some time, when once acted upon.

It may likewise be of use, before going further, to consider, that, if the globe, instead of being unequally heated, as we know that it is, were equally heated at all parts, from pole to pole, and being surrounded by an atmosphere, were then made to revolve on its axis, it would carry the atmosphere round with it exactly at the rate at which it was itself going. That portion of the air in contact with the equator would move about 1000 miles in one hour, while that in latitude 90° would be as motionless as the poles themselves. If the parts of the earth's surface about the equator be supposed to move at the above rate (which they do nearly), the following table will show the rotatory velocity at which any other points on the surface move at the different parallels of latitude, these rates being to 1000 as the cosine of the latitude to radius.

LATITUDE.	Rotatory Velocity of a point on the earth's surface at the different parallels of latitude per hour, in miles.	Difference of the Rotatory Velocity of the earth's surface in miles at the different parallels.
90° (North Pole.)	0	
80° North.	174	174
70° —	342	168
60° —	500	158
50° —	643	143
40° —	766	123
30° —	866	100
20° —	940	74
10° —	985	45
0° (The Equator)	1000	15
10° South.	985	15
20° —	940	45
30° —	866	74
40° —	766	100
50° —	643	123
60° —	500	143
70° —	342	158
80° —	174	168
90° (South Pole.)	0	174

From this it will be seen, that while the equator moves at the rate of 1000 miles an hour, the district about the latitude 30° moves only 860, or 140 miles slower. The average whirling velocity of the earth's easterly motion, in the space between the equator and latitude 30°, may be stated at 950 miles an hour; and that of the belt lying between 30° and 40°, at about 800 miles.

In the hypothetical case, above suggested, of the whole surface being equally heated, and consequently the whole atmosphere at the same temperature, there would be a universal calm, whatever might be the rotatory motion impressed upon the earth. If, however, we next suppose, what really is the case, that the air over the tropical region is more heated than that which is farther from the equator, this rarefied air will instantly ascend, and occupy a place above the colder and more dense air, which will flow in from the belts lying beyond the tropics.

This position hardly needs any more obvious illustration than the above simple statement. But as I have met with persons who, from not being much in the habit of considering such questions, did not immediately see the consequence of placing two fluids of different density side by side (such as portions of air differently heated), I may refer to a well-known experiment. If a long trough, divided in the middle by a sluice or partition, removable at pleasure, have one end filled with water, the other with quicksilver, both will remain quiet as long as they are divided. But when the sluice is drawn up, the lighter fluid will rise instantly and spread itself at the top, while the heavier will rush along the bottom of the trough under the lighter. If, instead of water and quicksilver, two portions of water, the one boiling, the other cold, be placed in juxtaposition, similar results will be observed; because boiling water is lighter than that which is cold. Now, exactly the same thing takes place when unequally heated portions of air are brought together.

If we go from this simple experiment, on a small scale, to the phenomena of the great globe itself, we shall find the very same laws in action, only modified by those particular circumstances which vary the scale and augment the varieties of the case, but take nothing from its consistency with the laws of statics. The cold air belonging to the belt just beyond and upon the tropics, which flows towards the equator, to occupy the place of the successive portions heated and raised into the upper regions over the equatorial belt, is acted upon by two forces, or, in other words, is influenced in its direction and rate by two distinct sources of motion. In the first place, there has been imparted to it a rotatory velocity of about 800 miles an hour to the east, by its contact with those parallels which revolve at that rate (see the Table, page 28); and, in the next place, its direction and rate will be modified by its tendency, already described, to flow towards the equator, which tendency is caused by the inequality in the density of the heated air between the tropics and the cold air beyond them. The combined effect of these two forces is to produce the South-east Trade in south latitude, and the North-east Trade on this side of the equator.

When the comparatively slow-moving air of the temperate zone, lying beyond the tropics, first comes in contact with those quicker-moving parts of the earth forming the tropical edges of the torrid zone, the apparent motion of the air from the east, caused by the relative difference of the rotatory velocity between the air and earth, is great, compared to the other motion of the air, caused by its being drawn directly towards the equator, to supply the place of the heated portions raised into the sky. Consequently, at the tropical borders of both Trades, the wind is found to blow very nearly from the east point.

I am tempted to borrow a few lines on this subject from Mrs. Somerville's work on the Mechanism of the Heavens, of which the preliminary or popular part will delight the general reader no less than the profound speculations which follow must, doubtless, reward the patient study of the mathematician. The passage takes a broad view of the question, without adverting to those minute variations in the phenomena, which more properly fall within the province of actual observers.

"The heat of the sun," says this accomplished writer, "occasions the Trade-winds, by rarefying the air at the equator, which causes the cooler and more dense part of the atmosphere to rush along the surface of the earth to the equator, while that which is heated is carried along the higher strata to the poles, forming two currents in the direction of the meridian. But the rotatory velocity of the air corresponding to its geographical situation decreases towards the poles: in approaching the equator, it must therefore revolve more slowly than the corresponding parts of the earth, and the bodies on the surface of the earth must strike against it with the excess of their velocity, and by its reaction they will meet with a resistance contrary to their motion of rotation; so that the wind will appear, to a person supposing himself to be at rest, to blow in a contrary direction to the earth's rotation, or from east to west, which is the direction of the Trade-winds*."

Since the cool air of the temperate and comparatively slow-moving zones beyond the tropics is drawn towards the equator, and comes successively in contact with parallels of latitude moving faster and faster towards the east, there must be gradually imparted to it, by the increased friction, a considerable degree of the increased rotatory velocity belonging to the low latitudes it has now reached. That is to say, there will be less and less difference of velocity between the easterly motion of this temperate air and the easterly motion of the earth; and, consequently, the wind, as it approaches the equator, will appear to blow less and less directly from the eastward. But, while the earth's rotation within the tropics is thus acting on the slower-moving air which has travelled to it from beyond the tropics, with increased friction at every successive moment, there has been no such powerful counteracting influence in operation to diminish the meridional motion impressed on the air in question. For although in proceeding from the tropics towards the equator, the wind might, at first sight, be supposed to have its speed somewhat lessened by friction along the earth's surface, the retardation due to this cause, if there be any at all, must be inconsiderable,

* Mechanism of the Heavens, by Mrs. Somerville. Preliminary Dissertation, p. lvi.

compared to that which affects the motion caused by the difference in the rotatory velocity of the earth at the different parallels. It must be recollected, also, that there is a constant demand for fresh air from the north and south, to occupy the place of the heated and rarefied air which is raised up in the torrid zone; and this demand being pretty equal, the motion it produces on the air in the direction of the meridian must likewise be uniform.

If it be admitted that all the easterly character of the Trade-winds is due to the difference of velocity between the rotation of the torrid zone of the earth from west to east, and that of the air impressed only with the slower rotatory motion to the east of the temperate zone (and this, I conceive, is obvious), it will follow, that if this difference of velocities (between the earth and the air in contact with it) be diminished or annihilated, the easterly character of these winds will be diminished or annihilated likewise. At the same time, there is no cause in operation, that I can discover, to alter the direction of the meridional motion, as it may be called, of the Trade-winds, or that by which they are impelled directly towards the equator.

At first starting from the temperate zone, on its voyage to the equator, the cold air of that slow-moving region is impressed with a rotatory velocity of only 800 miles per hour to the eastward, but it soon comes over parts of the earth moving more than 100 miles per hour faster to the eastward than itself. By the table (page 28) it will be observed, that the difference of velocity in the earth's rotation between latitudes 30° and 20° is 74 miles an hour, while between 20° and 10° it is only 45 miles, and in the next ten degrees the difference in rate per hour is reduced to 15 miles.

The velocity with which the air drawn from beyond the tropics travels along the sea towards the equator, is probably not above twenty miles an hour, a rate slow enough to allow time for the constantly increasing friction of the earth's rotation to act upon it, and draw it more and more entirely to the east. By the time it has reached the equatorial regions, the friction of the earth's surface has operated long enough to carry the air completely along with it; and, of course, all relative motion being done away with, everything easterly in the character of the Trade-winds will be at an end.

But although this constantly increasing friction of the earth's rotation has thus annihilated all relative easterly motion between the air and earth, that air still retains its motion towards the equator; and accordingly we do find the Trade-winds, at their equatorial limits, blowing, not from the east, as Hadley, Dr. Young, and others, conceived, but directly from the north and from the south respectively. The strength and velocity of the Trades at these places is, in general, considerably diminished, chiefly, perhaps, by the air becoming heated, and rising up rather than flowing along; and also, no doubt, by the meeting of the two opposite currents of air—one from the north, the other from the south—which produces the intermediate space called the Calms, or the Variables.

In strict conformity with these theoretical views, the clouds above the Trades are almost invariably observed to proceed in the contrary direction to the winds below. On the top of the Peak of Teneriffe I found a gentle breeze blowing from the south-westward, directly opposite to the course of the Trade-wind.

The more detailed circumstances usually met with in that part of a voyage to India which lies between 30° north and 30° south, and which I am about to describe, will now, I imagine, be readily understood. Before setting out, however, I must take the liberty of strongly recommending to any young or old person who may wish to see these matters clearly, and to have them fixed in his mind to useful purpose to follow both the theoretical and the practical parts of this explanation with the assistance of a terrestrial globe.

Most ships touch at Madeira, either to take in a stock of wine, to get fruit and vegetables, or merely to form a pleasant enough break in the early and most disagreeable part of the voyage. Some ships pass barely in sight of the high mountain which rises above the town of Funchal, and satisfy themselves with taking sights for verifying the rates of their chronometers when on the meridian of the island; while others tantalise their passengers still more by sweeping through the roads, but without anchoring, or even communicating with the shore. I need not observe, that the captains by such ships are pretty deeply, if not very loudly, abused by all hands, passengers especially, who, it may be remarked, are perhaps the most dissatisfied, growling, and troublesome, because the most idle, of mortals. The cause is obvious enough; they have nothing to do, and, as Jack pithily and pertinently says, "the instant the devil catches a man idle he sets him to work." Accordingly, though it be the custom to pity passengers, and although assuredly they well deserve pity, there is another class who deserve compassion far more, I mean their wretched victim the captain, whom it is their chief study, and almost single enjoyment, to torment. But as this topic of passengers and captains requires a long chapter by itself, I shall proceed at present on our voyage across the line.

Shortly after leaving Madeira, which is in 32½° north latitude, a ship may expect to meet the Trades; but she cannot calculate with any certainty upon catching them till she arrives at the parallel of 28°. On first reaching the Trade-wind, it will be found to blow very nearly from due east, and with this a course is easily steered past or amongst the Canaries, and thence for the Cape de Verdes. Some navigators pass within this group, others keep so far out as barely to make San Antonio; and this, I think, is considered the best route. As the ship proceeds to the southward, the wind draws gradually round from the east to north-east, and eventually to north-north-east, and even to north, at the southern margin of the north-east Trade-wind.

The position of this margin or southern edge, which in technical language is called the equatorial limit of the Trade, varies considerably with the season of the year. From December to May inclusive, it frequently reaches as far as the 3d degree of north-latitude, though it ranges about 5° and 6° north. From June to November, it is

shifted back as far, sometimes, as 13° north, but it seldom extends as far south as 8° north.

I have given below, a very curious and instructive Table, showing the equatorial limits of both Trade-winds, deduced by the late Captain James Horsburgh, hydrographer of the East India Company, from the observations of 238 ships. This table shows very clearly the effect of the absence or presence of the sun in shifting the limits of the Trades, drawing them after him, as it were. The presence of the sun in either hemisphere obstructs considerably the regularity and strength of the Trade-winds in that hemisphere, and *vice versâ*.

Table showing the Equatorial Limits of the Trade Winds between the 18th and 26th degree of West Longitude, determined from the Log-books of 238 Ships.

Months.	Latitude in which the Ships Lost N.E. Trade Outward bound.	Mean	Got N.E. Trade Homeward bound	Mean	Mean Out and Home.	Latitude in which the Ships Lost S.E. Trade Homeward bound	Mean	Got S.E. Trade Outward bound.	Mean	Mean Out and Home.	Diff. of the 2 Mean Limits of N.E. and S.E. Trades.
	North.	N.	North.	N.	N.	° °	N.	North.	N.	N.	
January ..	5° to 10°	7°	3° to 6°	4¾°	5¾°	½ — to 4 N.	2¼°	2 to 4°	3°	2¾°	3°
February .	5 — 10	7	2 — 7	5	6	2 S. to 3	1½	½ — 1	1	1¼	4¾
March....	2½ — 8	5½	2 — 7	5	5½	1 — 2	1	½ — 2½	1½	1¼	3¾
April.....	4 — 9	6	4 — 8	5¾	5¾	2 — 2½	1	0 — 2½	1¼	1¼	4½
May	5 — 10	7	4½ — 7	6	6½	1 N. to 4	2½	0 — 4	3	2¾	3¾
June	7 — 13	9	7 — 12	9	9	1 — 5	3	0 — 5	3	3	6
July.....	8½ — 15	12	11 — 14	12	12	1 — 6	4	1 — 5	3	3½	8½
August...	11 — 15	13	11 — 14½	13	13	3 — 5	4	1 — 4	2½	3¼	9¾
September.	9 — 14	11½	11 — 14	12	11¾	2 — 4	3½	1 — 3	2	3	8¾
October...	7½ — 13	10	8½ — 14	10	10	2 — 5	3	1 — 5	3	3	7
November.	6 — 11	9	7 — 10	7	8	3 — 4	3½	3 — 5	4	3¾	4½
December .	5 — 7	6	3 — 6	5	5½	1 — 4	2½	1 — 4½	4	3¼	2½

N.B.—The mean numbers incline a little from the true mean towards the extreme limit experienced by the majority of the ships.

The great difficulty experienced in making the outward-bound voyage commences after the ship has been deserted by the north-east Trade, for she has then to fight her way to the southward across the region of Calms and Variables. But as these Variables blow generally from the southward and westward, from a cause afterwards to be explained, it is obvious enough why this part of the homeward voyage is always more easily made than the outward passage. These southerly breezes, which are met with in the Variables, blow at times with considerable force, and greatly perplex the young navigator, who, trusting perhaps to some of the erroneous published accounts, not unnaturally reckons upon meeting the regular Trade-wind, blowing, as he supposes, from the east near the equator, not from the south ; still less is he prepared or pleased to find it blowing from the south-westward.

This troublesome range, intervening between the two Trades, varies in width from 150 to more than 500 miles. It is widest in September, and narrowest in December or January. I now speak more particularly of what happens in the Atlantic. In the wide Pacific, far from land, fewer modifying circumstances interfere with the regular course of the phenomena, than in the comparatively narrow sea formed by the opposite shoulders of Africa and South America.

Calms, also, are met with in this intermediate region, or purgatory of the outward-bound voyage, and occasionally violent tornados or squalls, which, in a moment, tear away every rag of canvas from a ship's yards. For several hours at a time, also, rain falls down in absolute torrents. Even when the weather clears up, and a fresh breeze comes it is generally from the southward, directly in the outward-bound navigator's teeth. He must have patience, however, and strive to make the most of it by keeping on that tack by which most southing is to be gained. It is now, I believe, generally held to be the best practice to place the ship between 18° and 23° of west longitude on losing the north-east Trade ; and likewise to endeavour, if possible, to cross the equator somewhere between these two longitudes. Before reaching the line, however, the navigator will almost always be met by the south-east Trade-wind. From January to May he may expect to meet it in 1° or 2° north latitude ; but in summer and autumn, he will find the northern or equatorial limit of the south-east Trade a degree or two still further to the northward of the lines. See the above table.

On first encountering the south-east Trade, an outward-bound ship is obliged to steer much more to the westward than she wishes to do, in consequence of the wind blowing so directly towards the equator, and not along it, as some of the books will insist on, in spite of nature. So that if she be a dull sailer, she may have some difficulty in weathering the coast of Brazil about Cape St. Roque. As she proceeds onwards, however, and makes a little more southing, the wind will haul more and more round from the south to the south-east, then east-south-east, and eventually to east at the southern limit of the Trade-wind. An inexperienced sailor, on first entering the south-east Trade, is very apt to be too solicitous about making southing, and hugs the wind much too

close ; whereas, he ought rather to keep his ship off a little, give her a fathom or two of the fore and main sheets, and take a small pull of the weather top-sail and top-gallant braces, to ensure making good way through the water. Indeed, many officers go so far as to recommend flanking across the south-east Trade with a fore-topmast studding-sail set. Although, I think, there can be no doubt of the soundness of this advice, I confess that it does require no inconsiderable degree of faith to adopt a course, which, apparently, takes the ship not directly away from her object, but very much out of the straight road. In this respect, it may be remarked, that the scale of navigation on every Indian voyage is so great, and the importance of getting into those parallels where favourable breezes are certain to be met with, of so much more consequence than the gain of mere distance, that two or three hundred miles to the right or left, or even twice that space, is often not to be regarded. Accordingly, in cutting or flanking across the south-east Trade-wind, the object, it should be remembered, is not to shorten the distance, but to reach those latitudes where strong westerly gales are to be met with, by help of which five hundred or a thousand miles of lost distance are speedily made up, and the rest of the passage secured.

In those regions lying beyond the southern tropic, westerly winds prevail during the greater part of the year, exactly as we find on this side of the northern tropic. In the southern hemisphere, and far from the land, the wind may be said to blow from the westward almost as steadily as the Trades do from the eastward. The great object, therefore, for an outward-bound ship is to get far enough south to ensure this fair wind. Beyond the latitude of 30°, and as far as 40°, this purpose will generally be answered.

We are sufficiently familiar in England with the fact of westerly winds prevailing in the Atlantic ; but it may be interesting to state a nautical fact, established by ample experience, showing the degree in which this circumstance operates practically. From a list of the passages made by the New York monthly packets across the Atlantic, during a period of six years, it is shown that the average length of the voyage from Liverpool to America, that is, towards the west, is forty days ; while the average length of the homeward passage, or that from west to east, is only twenty-three days. And it may fix these facts more strongly in the recollection, to mention, that the passage-money from England to America (against the prevailing wind) is five guineas more than that paid on the return voyage ; the outward voyage costing thirty-five, the homeward thirty guineas.

This prevalence of westerly winds beyond the tropics is readily explained by the same reasoning which has been applied to the Trades blowing within them. The swift-moving air of the torrid zone, on being rarefied and raised up, flows along towards the poles, and in a direction from the equator, above the cooler and slower-moving air, which, as I have already described, is drawn along the surface of the earth from the temperate regions beyond the tropics. When the rarefied equatorial air has travelled some thirty or forty degrees of latitude along the upper regions of the atmosphere towards the poles, it becomes cooled, and is ready to descend again, between the latitudes of 30 and 60°, to supply the place of the lower air, drawn off towards the equator by the Trade-winds. But this partially-cooled air falls on a part of the earth's surface which is moving much more slowly towards the east, in its diurnal rotation, than the air which has descended upon it, and which is still impressed with a great proportion of its eastern velocity due to the equatorial parallels of latitude, where it was heated and raised up. The necessary consequence of this is, to produce a rapid motion in the air from the west over the earth's surface ; and this, combined with the other motion of the same portion of air, or that which has driven it from the equatorial regions, produces so remarkable a prevalence of south-westerly winds in the northern hemisphere, and north-westerly winds in the southern hemisphere, in those districts lying between the latitudes of 30° and 60

In all that has been said above, it has been assumed that the quickest-moving or equatorial belt of the earth is also the hottest, and consequently that over which the air has the greatest tendency to rise. But, although this is generally true, it is not, by any means, universally so. The variations, however, which are observed to occur in those places where the circumstances form an exception to the general rule, tend strongly to confirm the theory of Hadley. The monsoons of India, as I shall presently show, are examples of this ; but the most striking instance with which I am personally acquainted occurs in the Pacific Ocean, between the Bay of Panama and the Peninsula of California, from latitude 8° to 22° north. If the huge continent of Mexico were taken away, and only sea left in its place, there can be no doubt but the ordinary phenomena of the Trade-winds would be observable in that part of the Pacific above mentioned. Cool air would then be drawn from the slow-moving parallels lying to the northward, towards the swift-moving latitudes, near the equator, in order to supply the place of the rarefied air removed to the higher regions of the atmosphere, and, of course, north-easterly breezes would be produced. But when the sun comes over Mexico, that vast district of country is made to act the part of an enormous heater, and becomes a far more powerful cause of rarefaction to the superincumbent air than the ocean which lies between it and the equator. Accordingly, the air over Mexico, between the latitudes of 10° and 30°, is more heated than that which lies over the sea between the line and latitude 20° ; and as the coolest, or least heated, that is, the most dense fluid, always rushes towards the place lately occupied by the hottest and most buoyant, the air from the equator will be drawn towards the coast of Mexico, the great local source of heat and rarefaction.

But as this equatorial air is of course impressed with a more rapid eastern velocity than those parts of the earth which form the southern shores of Mexico, a westerly wind must be produced by the relative difference in these two motions. At that particular season of the year when the sun is in high southern declination, Mexico is not exposed to his perpendicular rays. The equatorial regions are then more heated than Mexico, and accordingly we actually find north-easterly breezes nearly as

they would be if Mexico were out of the way, and quite in accordance with our theory.

In like manner, in the Atlantic, when the sun is far to the north, the great deserts of the western angle, or shoulder of Africa, become as vehemently heated, or more so, perhaps, than Mexico, and this draws the air from the equator, so as to produce the south-westerly winds I have already spoken of in the troublesome range called the Variables.

Finally, the great monsoons of the Indian ocean and China sea contribute to establish this theory of Hadley, though I am not aware that he ever brought it to bear on these very interesting phenomena. They are eminently deserving of such notice, however, from being periodical Trade-winds of the highest order of utility in one of the busiest commercial regions of the world. Their periodical or shifting character, to which they owe the name of monsoon, from an Oriental word signifying season, is the circumstance upon which their extensive utility in a great measure depends, amongst nations where the complicated science of navigation is but in a rude state. Myriads of vessels sail from their homes during one monsoon before the wind, or so nearly before it, that there is no great skill required in reaching all the ports at which they wish to touch ; and when the wind shifts to the opposite quarter, they steer back again, in like manner, with a flowing sheet. Thus, with an exceedingly small portion of nautical skill, they contrive to make their passages by means of what we blue jackets call 'a soldier's wind, there and back again.' It will sometimes happen that these rude navigators miscalculate their time, or meet with accidents to retard them till the period of change has gone past, and then they have no resource but to wait for half a year till the monsoon shifts ; not quite so unpleasantly, to be sure, as Parry, when jammed up in the ice, but scarcely less fixed.

Experienced sailors, in like circumstances, acquainted with the varieties of winds prevailing in those seas, and having some acquaintance with this theory, if not in their heads, at least at their finger-ends, would speedily get their vessels out of the scrape above described, into which the lubberly Chinese junks sometimes fall. They might, and certainly would, lose time in making a roundabout of some two or three hundred miles in searching for a wind ; but, if they really knew what they were about, they would be sure to catch it at last, and to turn it to their purpose.

I must repeat, that any one not personally familiar with the lands and seas of the East will hardly be able to follow with satisfaction or advantage the sketch of the monsoons which I am about to give, unless he have a globe under his fingers to refer to at every sentence. I dare not hope, otherwise, to make myself intelligible in this, or, indeed, in any other part of a chapter so completely professional.

From April to October, when the sun's rays fall with greatest effect on Arabia, India, and China, and the several interjacent seas to which these immense countries give their name, the air in contact with them, becoming heated, rises, and gives place to fresh supplies drawn from the equator. § But this equatorial mass of air has had imparted to it by the earth's rotation a greater degree of velocity in the direction from west to east than belongs to the countries and seas just mentioned ; and this additional velocity, combined with its motion from the equator, in rushing to fill up the vacuum caused by the rarefaction of the air over those regions intersected by the tropic, causes the south-west monsoon. "This wind," says Horsburgh, "prevails from April to October, between the equator and the tropic of Cancer, and it reaches from the east coast of Africa to the coasts of India, China, and the Philippine Islands ; its influence extends sometimes into the Pacific Ocean as far as the Marian Islands, on to longitude about 145° east, and it reaches as far north as the Japan Islands *."

The late Captain Horsburgh, the most accomplished and intelligent, and, I may add, one of the most useful of oriental navigators, thus goes on to describe what takes place in the winter months :—

"The north-east monsoon," he says, "prevails from October to May, throughout nearly the same space that the south-west monsoon prevails in the opposite season mentioned above. But the monsoons are subject to great obstructions by land ; and in contracted places, such as Malacca Strait, they are changed into variable winds. Their limits are not everywhere the same, nor do they always shift exactly at the same period †."

During this last-named period, when the north-east monsoon is blowing, viz. from October to May, the sun is acting with its greatest energy on the regions about the equator, and the seas lying between it and the southern tropic, while the countries formerly mentioned (Arabia, India, and China), lying under the northern tropic, become comparatively cool. The air over these regions becomes relatively more dense than the rarefied air near the line ; consequently the cool air rushes to the southward to interchange places with that which has been heated ; and as the cool air comes from slower-moving to quicker-moving parallels of latitude, that is, from the tropical to the equatorial regions, the north-easterly monsoon is produced, very much resembling in its effect, as it strictly does in its cause, the ordinary trade-wind of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

This is a very general view of what may be called the great monsoons of India ; but there are many variations in different places, all of which are so readily explained by the foregoing theory, that they form by no means the least interesting branch of the subject, or the least satisfactory of its illustrations.

One of the most extensive of these varieties, though of a less general and sweeping character than those which blow in the Arabian sea and bay of Bengal, is found in a very remote part of the world. "From October to April this north-west monsoon prevails between the north-east part of Madagascar and the west coast of New Holland ; and it is generally confined between the equator and 10° or 11° south latitude, but subject to irregularities ‡." This westerly wind is evidently produced by the air drawn actually from the equator towards the slower-moving latitudes of the earth, by the rarefaction of the air to the southward when the sun is near the tropic of Capricorn. "The south-east monsoon predomi-

* Horsburgh's Directions, Introduction, p. 4.
† Ibid. ‡ Ibid.

nates from April to October in the space last mentioned, and in some places reaches to the equator*." In this case, the slow-moving air near the southern tropic is brought, as in the ordinary case of the south-east Trade-wind, to the quick-moving parts of the earth's surface.

The following remark of Horsburgh's, in describing the monsoons, is extremely valuable, and assists, in the neatest manner possible, to explain Hadley's theory of these matters:—

"The parts where the north-west and the south-east monsoons prevail with greatest strength and regularity are in the Java sea, and from thence eastward to Timor, amongst the Molucca and Banda islands, and onward to New Guinea†;" for it will be obvious to any one who inspects the globe on reading this passage, that there occurs in the neighbourhood of the spots alluded to, a powerful cause for the strength and regularity of the monsoons. The enormous island, or continent, as it might almost be called, of New Holland, may well be supposed to act the part of a heater from October to April, when the sun is so nearly over it. During that period, the equatorial air is drawn to the south, along the intermediate seas, amongst the Moluccas and other Spice islands, so as to produce a strong and steady north-westerly monsoon. Of course, the opposite effect will be produced when the sun retreats to the north, and leaves New Holland to cool.

These instances are quite enough, I should imagine, to satisfy ordinary curiosity on this point; but professional men will not, or ought not, to be contented till they have investigated all branches of this important topic; including, of course, that elegant and very useful episode, the land and sea breezes of all hot climates. Horsburgh's East India Directory, which I have quoted above so frequently, is by far the best authority with which I am acquainted on these subjects. Indeed I may say, without any fear of contradiction, that this extraordinary work is one of the most valuable gifts which well-directed industry has bestowed on modern navigation. Under its sole guidance I have sailed, I dare say, over more than a hundred thousand miles of the earth's surface, not in broad daylight only, and in favourable weather, but often in the dark, and in storms, and frequently, too, when not one person on board had ever visited those regions before. In proportion as my own local knowledge of those seas became matured, by the experience of several years while navigating amongst them, so the confidence I felt in the authority of this admirable navigator became more and more confirmed.

I must not, however, omit to do justice to a beautifully-written and accurate Essay on Winds and Currents, by that Prince of all Voyagers, Old Dampier; who with means far more circumscribed than most of his successors, has contrived to arrange and condense his information in such a way as not only to render it available to practical men, but to make it intelligible and interesting to every class of readers.

* Horsburgh, Introduction, p. 4. † Ibid.

CHAPTER VIII.

PROGRESS OF THE VOYAGE.

Let people say what they please of the fine bracing weather of a cold climate, I have never seen any truth-speaking persons who, on coming fairly to the trial, did not complain of a cold frosty morning as a very great nuisance, or who did not cling eagerly to the fire to unbrace themselves again. For my own part, I have always delighted in the relaxation, if such be the word, or the lassitude caused by hot weather; and, accordingly, have very rarely in my life encountered too hot a day. Of course, in saying this, I take it for granted that the weather is to have fair play, and that our dress, apartments, and all other circumstances, shall be suitable. Many a day far too hot have I met with in the choky, oven-like streets of London, where the blacks, and the dust, and the multitudes of people, combine to augment the temperature, already raised to the true German stove pitch by the reflection of such of the sun's rays as succeed in forcing their way through the stratum of smoke to the half-black, half-red bricks of the walls. In winter evenings, too, when every crevice or opening for the air in a well-packed ball-room is carefully kept shut by orders from those perverse dowagers who choose to plant themselves near the windows, a lively representation of the climate of the Black-hole at Calcutta is sure to be enacted. At such seasons it certainly is rather too hot. Occasionally, also, at night, on board ship, in warm climates, in harbour, or in a calm at sea, when all hands are below, the climate may well be called insufferable. Or in such horrible sinks and swamps as Batavia and New Orleans, where the motionless air becomes thick and clammy with miasmata, there can be no denying that the heat is too great.

But I have very seldom, if ever, felt the weather disagreeably warm, even in India, when sailing on the open sea, or enjoying the free range of a wide country, under awnings and bungaloes, or stretched in a palanquin, or shaded by an umbrella on the back of an elephant. Soldiers and sailors, whose duty exposes them at all hours, either on a march or in boats, must, in spite of every contrivance of this sort, be often struck down by the heat, and sigh with all their hearts for the bracing frosts of higher latitudes. I grant, therefore, that what is said above has reference exclusively to those happy folks who can command their own time and occupations, and who have the means of bringing to bear on their comforts those innumerable luxurious contrivances which the ingenuity of wealth has devised in the East, to render its climate not only bearable, but one of the most enjoyable in the world.

As we sailed along on our voyage to India, gradually slipping down from the high to the low latitudes, the merry sun crept up higher and higher every day towards the zenith, while the thermometer, of course, rose likewise. What was most agreeable in this change from cold to warmth, was the little difference between the temperature of the day and that of the night. As we approached the equator, the thermometer fell only from 82° in the day-time to 79° or 80° at night, which, on deck, was delightful. We did not, of course, come

to this high temperature all at once; for on the 6th of May, the day after we passed directly under the sun, the average of the twenty-four hours was 73°, and at night 69° and 70°.

It is not to be imagined that every one was pleased with these changes; for on board ship, as on shore, there exist, at all times, and in all latitudes, weathers, and climates, a set of discontented spirits, whose acquired habit, or whose radical nature it is, to find fault with the existing state of things, be these what they may. To such cantankerous folks a growl of misery would really seem to be the great paradoxical happiness of their lives, and the more unreasonable the cause, provided there seem reason in it, the better for their purpose. It is frequently not any actual inconvenience of which these grumblers complain, but chiefly that which they might, could, or would suffer, were certain things to happen, all of which, of course, it is part of your thorough-bred growler to prophesy will happen. I have seen a middy of this stamp glad to find, on coming below, that some insignificant portion of his dinner really had been devoured by his hungry messmates, while he himself was keeping his watch on deck.

"I am used worse than a dog!" he would cry, secretly delighted to have gained the luxury of a grievance, upon which he might ring the changes of his ill-usage for the next week. "I can't even get a basin of pease-soup put by for me; it's such an infernal shame, I'll cut the service!"

The diversity of climate on an Indian voyage furnishes capital nuts for these perturbed spirits. It is first too cold, then too hot; then there is not wind enough; then it blows too fresh in the squalls: by-and-by the nights are discovered to be abominably close and sultry, and in the day the fierce flaming downright heat of the sun is still worse; then the calms are never to be over; or the lying trades, as they call them, have got capsised, and blow from the west instead of the east! After the line has been crossed, and the south-east wind is met with, the weather soon becomes what these ingenious fellows call too temperate, then it grows too cold again; and next off the Cape, the latitude is too stormy. In this alone they have some reason; and I have often regretted that, by a royal ordinance of the King of Portugal, the name of this mighty promontory was changed from Cabo de Tormentos, the headland of storms, to its present spoony title. In short, this grand voyage is merely a peristrephic panorama of miseries, which if they survive, say they, it will be happy for them.—Happy! Not a whit. It is out of their nature to be happy. To find fault, and to fling away the good the gods provide them, to sour every cup of enjoyment by the gall of discontent expressed from their own hearts, and to aggravate the pain of every real wound by the impatience of idle complaints, is their diseased joy. 'Evil, be thou my good!' they might well exclaim; for, instead of heightening the pleasures of life by full participation, or subduing its inevitable evils, or, at all events, softening their asperity by enduring with fortitude and cheerfulness what cannot be helped, these self-tormentors reject what is substantially pleasing, and cling with habitual but morbid relish to whatever is disagreeable.

As we glided along, through the Trade-winds, towards the neck of sea which divides Africa from South America, the symptoms of a change in climate became daily more manifest. Every skylight and stern window was fastened wide open, and every cabin-scuttle driven out, that a free draught of air might sweep through the ship all night long. In the day-time, the pitch in the seams of the upper-deck soon began to melt, and, by sticking to the soles of our shoes, plastered the planks, to the great discomfiture of the captain of the after-guard. The tar, oozing from the cordage aloft, dropped on our heads, speckled the snow-white boat covers, and obliged us to spread the hammock cloths, to prevent the bedding being ruined by the spots. On the larboard or eastern side of the ship, which, of course, is always presented to the sun when crossing the Trades on the outward-bound voyage, the pitch and rosin with which the seams had been payed ran down in little streams across the lines of paint. To prevent, as far as we could, some of these annoyances, we spread the awnings over the decks, and triced up the curtains, fore and aft, while every art was used to introduce air to all parts of the ship. The half-ports were removed from the main-deck guns, the gratings put on one side, and as many windsails sent down the hatchways as could be made to catch a puff of air. Blue trousers and beaver scrapers soon gave way before the elements, and were succeeded by nankeens, straw hats, and canvas caps. In the captain's cabin, where the presence of the governor, our passenger, still kept up the strait-laced etiquettes of the service, coats and epaulettes appeared at dinner; but in the gun-room, the officers, the instant they came below, slipped on their light white jackets, and, disdaining waistcoat, seized their flutes and books, and drew their chairs as near as possible to the mouth of the windsail. In the midshipmen's berth, outside in the steerage, truth compels me to acknowledge, that the shirt without neckcloth or stock, and sometimes with its sleeves rolled up to the elbows, was the most fashionable rig. The seamen and marines, of course, dined on the main-deck, not only that they might enjoy the fresh air breathing gently in upon them through the ports on the weather side, and sweeping out again by those to leeward, but that the lower-deck might be kept as cool and airy as possible against the sultry feverish night season.

On such occasions the men leave their tables and stools below, and either seat themselves tailor-fashion, or recline Roman-fashion. Nor is this in the least degree unpleasant; for the deck of a man-of-war is made as clean every morning as any table, and is kept so during the day by being swept at least once an hour. Of all the tunes played by the boatswain's pipe, that which calls the sweepers is the most frequently heard. When the order is given for dining on deck, the different messes into which the crew are divided occupy the spots immediately above their usual mess-places below, as far as the guns allow of their doing so. It has always struck me as very pleasing, to see the main-deck covered, from the after hatchway to the cook's coppers, with the people's messes, enjoying their noonday repast, as delicious to them, and probably far more so, than any turtle feast to any alderman; while the celestial grog, with which their hard, dry, salt junk is washed

down, out-matches twenty-fold in Jack's estimation all the thin potations, the clarets, and hocks, and vin de Graves, of thos who, in no very courteous language, are called their betters. For I will venture to say, that at such well-fed moments, no mortals, of whatever rank in the world, take precedence, on the score of enjoyment and contentment, of these our light-hearted tars and jolly marines.

Until we had crossed the North-east Trade, and reached the Calms, the ship's way through the water was too great to allow of bathing alongside; but we easily contrived a shower-bath, which answered very well. This consisted of a packing-box, the bottom of which was perforated with holes, triced up between two of the skids, near the gangway, and under the quarter of one of the boats on the booms. A couple of the top-men with draw-buckets supplied the water from above, while the bather stood on the main-deck, enjoying the shower. The time selected for this delightful bath was usually about four o'clock in the morning, after the middle watch was out, and before the exhausted officer tumbled into bed. A four hours' walk, indeed, in a sultry night, be it managed ever so gently, has a tendency to produce a degree of heat approaching to feverishness; and I have no words to describe the luxury of standing under a cool shower when the long task is ended. We were generally just enough fatigued to be sure of a sound, light, happy sleep, and just enough heated to revel in the coolest water that was to be had. In fact, we found that of the sea much too warm, being only two or three degrees below the temperature of the air. To remedy this, our plan was, to expose a dozen buckets-full on the gangway at eight or nine o'clock in the evening; and these, being allowed to stand till morning, became so much cooler by the evaporation in the night, that the shock was unspeakably grateful.

Perhaps there is not any more characteristic evidence of our being within the tropical regions, one, I mean, which strikes the imagination more forcibly, than the company of those picturesque little animals, if it be correct so to call them, the flying-fish. It is true, that a stray one or two may sometimes be met with far north, making a few short skips out of the water, and I even remember seeing several close to the edge of the banks of Newfoundland, in latitude 45°. These, however, had been swept out of their natural position by the huge gulf-stream, an ocean in itself, which retains much of its temperature far into the northern regions, and possibly helps to modify the climate over the Atlantic. But it is not until the voyager has fairly reached the heart of the torrid zone that he sees the flying-fish in perfection.

No familiarity with the sight can ever render us indifferent to the graceful flight of these most interesting of all the finny, or, rather, winged tribe. On the contrary, like a bright day, or a smiling countenance, or good company of any kind, the more we see of them, the more we learn to value their presence. I have, in fact, hardly ever observed a person so dull or unimaginative, that his eye did not glisten as he watched a shoal, or, it may well be called, a covey of flying-fish rise from the sea, and skim along for several hundred yards. There is something in it so very peculiar, so totally dissimilar to everything else in other parts of the world, that our wonder goes on increasing every time we see even a single one take its flight. The incredulity, indeed, of the old Scotch wife on this head is sufficiently excusable. "You may hae seen rivers o' milk, and mountains o' sugar," said she to her son, returned from a voyage; "but you'll ne'er gar me believe you have seen a fish that could flee!"

I have endeavoured to form an estimate as to the length of these flights, and find two hundred yards set down in my notes as about the longest; but, I think, subsequent observation has extended the space. The amiable Humboldt good-naturedly suggests, that these flights may be mere gambols, and not indicative of the flying-fish being pursued by their formidable enemy, the dolphin. I wish I could believe so; for it were much more agreeable to suppose, that at the end of the fine sweep which they take at the height of ten or twenty feet above the surface, they may fall gently and safely on the bosom of the sea, than pop full into the voracious jaws of their merciless foe.

I do not recollect whether the eminent traveller just mentioned, who not only observes many more things than most men, but describes them much better, has anywhere mentioned his having witnessed one of these chases. Indeed, they are not very often seen; at least, I am not sure that I have observed above half-a-dozen, though I have crossed and recrossed the equator fourteen times. The prettiest I remember to have assisted at, as the French say, and the details of which I shall describe presently, was during the first voyage I ever made through those regions of the sun. The pleasant Trade, which had watted us with different degrees of velocity, over a distance of more than a thousand miles, at last gradually failed. The first symptom of the approaching calm was the sails beginning to flap gently against the masts, so gently, indeed, that we half hoped it was caused, not so much by the diminished force of the breeze, with which we were very unwilling to part, as by that long and peculiar swell which,

> "In the torrid clime
> Dark heaving,"

has found the hand of a master-artist to embody it in a description, more technically correct, and certainly far more graphic in all its parts, than if the picture had been filled up from the log-books of ten thousand voyagers.

The same noble writer, by merely letting his imagination run wild a little, has also given a sketch of what might take place were one of these calms to be perpetual; and so true to nature is all his pencilling, that many a time, when day after day has passed without a breath of wind, and there came no prospect of any breeze, I have recollected the following strange lines, and almost fancied that such might be our own dismal fate:

> "The rivers, lakes, and ocean, all stood still,
> And nothing stirr'd within their silent depths;
> Ships sailorless lay rotting on the sea,
> And their masts fell down piecemeal; as they dropp'd,
> They slept on the abyss without a surge.
> The waves were dead; the tides were in their grave,
> The moon, their mistress, had expired before;
> The winds were wither'd in the stagnant air,
> And the clouds perish'd."—— *

* Darkness. By Lord Byron.

The faint zephyrs, which had coquetted with our languid sails for an hour or two, at length took their leave, first of the courses, then of the top-sails, and lastly of the royals and the smaller flying kites aloft. In vain we looked round and round the horizon for some traces of a return of our old friend the Trade, but could distinguish nothing save one polished, dark-heaving sheet of glass, reflecting the unbroken disk of the sun, and the bright clear sky in the moving mirror beneath. From the heat, which soon became intense, there was no escape, either on deck or below, aloft in the tops, or still higher on the cross-trees; neither could we find relief down in the hold; for it was all the same, except that in the exposed situations we were scorched or roasted, in the others suffocated. The useless helm was lashed amidships, the yards were lowered on the cap, and the boats were dropped into the water, to fill up the cracks and rents caused by the fierce heat. The occasion was taken advantage of to shift some of the sails, and to mend others; most of the running-ropes also were turned end for end. A listless feeling stole over us all, and we lay about the decks gasping for breath, in vain seeking some alleviation to our thirst by drink! drink! drink! Alas, the transient indulgence only made the matter worse!

Meanwhile, our convoy of huge China ships, rolling very slowly on the top of the long, smooth, and scarcely perceptible ridges, or sinking as gently between their summits, were scattered in all directions, with their heads in different ways, some looking homeward again, and some, as if by instinct, keeping still for the south. How it happens I do not know, but on occasions of perfect calm, or such as appear to be perfectly calm, the ships of a fleet generally drift away from one another; so that, at the end of a few hours, the whole circle bounded by the horizon is speckled over with these unmanageable hulks, as they may for the time be considered. It will occasionally happen, indeed, that two ships draw so near in a calm, as to incur some risk of falling on board one another. I need scarcely mention, that, even in the smoothest water ever found in the open sea, two large ships coming into actual contact must prove a formidable encounter. As long as they are apart, their gentle and rather graceful movements are fit subjects of admiration; and I have often seen people gazing, for an hour at a time, at the ships of a becalmed fleet, slowly twisting round, changing their position, and rolling from side to side, as silently as if they had been in harbour, or accompanied only by the faint, rippling sound tripping along the water-line, as the copper below the bends alternately sunk into the sea, or rose out of it, dripping wet, and shining as bright and clean as a new coin, from the constant friction of the ocean during the previous rapid passage across the Trade-winds.

But all this picturesque admiration changes to alarm when ships come so close as to risk a contact; for these motions, which appear so slow and gentle to the eye, are irresistible in their force; and as the chances are against the two vessels moving exactly in the same direction at the same moment, they must speedily grind or tear one another to pieces. Supposing them to come in contact side by side, the first roll would probably tear away the fore and main channels of both ships; the next roll, by interlacing the lower yards, and entangling the spars of one ship with the shrouds and backstays of the other, would in all likelihood bring down all three masts of both ships, not piecemeal, as the poet hath it, but in one furious crash. Beneath the ruins of the spars, the coils of rigging, and the enormous folds of canvas, might lie crushed many of the best hands, who, from being always the foremost to spring forward in such seasons of danger, are surest to be sacrificed. After this first catastrophe, the ships would probably drift away from one another for a little while, only to tumble together again and again, till they had ground one another to the water's edge, and one or both of them would fill and go down. In such encounters it is impossible to stop the mischief, and oak and iron break and crumble in pieces, like sealing-wax and pie-crust. Many instances of such accidents are on record, but I never witnessed one.

To prevent these frightful rencontres, care is always taken to hoist out the boats in good time, if need be, to tow the ships apart, or, what is generally sufficient, to tow the ships' heads in opposite directions. I scarcely know why this should have the effect, but certainly it appears that, be the calm ever so complete, or dead, as the term is, a vessel generally forges ahead, or steals along imperceptibly in the direction she is looking to; possibly from the conformation of the hull.

Shortly after the Trade-wind left us, a cloud rose in the south, which soon filled the whole air, and discharged upon us the most furious shower I ever beheld (except, perhaps, once at San Blas in Mexico), and such as I can compare to nothing but that flung on the traveller's head who ventures behind the sheet of water at Niagara. As few people try this experiment, I am afraid the comparison will go but little way to help the imagination in conceiving the violence of a tropical shower. I must mention, however, one very essential difference between the two cases. In the space between the rock and the cataract of Niagara, the deluge of water is accompanied by such violent gusts of wind, that the inexperienced person who ventures into this strangest but grandest of all caverns is in constant terror of being whisked off his legs, and thrown headlong into the horrid, boiling, roaring pool below. In the tropical showers above alluded to, the rain generally falls down in perpendicular lines of drops, or spouts, without a breath of wind, unaccompanied by thunder or any other noise, and in one great gush or splash, as if some prodigious reservoir had been upset over the fleet from the edge of the cloud.

Our noble commander, delighted with the opportunity of replenishing his stock of water, called out, "Put shot on each side, and slack all the stops down, so that the awnings may slope inwards. Get buckets and empty casks to hand instantly!"

In a few minutes the awnings were half full of water, and a hole connected with a hose having been prepared beforehand near the lowest point, where the canvas was weighed down by the shot, a stream descended as if a cock had been turned. Not a drop of this was lost; but being carried off, it was poured into a starting-tub at the hatchway, and so conveyed by a pipe to the casks in the

hold. By the time the squall was over, we had filled six or eight butts; and although not good to drink, from being contaminated by the tar from the ropes and sails, the water answered admirably for washing, which was our object in catching it.

Ever since the days of Captain Cook (the father of our present domestic economy on board ship), it has been the practice to allow the crew two washing-days per week, on the details of which proceeding, and some other points of discipline, first introduced by that great voyager, I shall have occasion to touch at another time. At present I merely wish to give a hint to those who never tried the experiment, that there is a prodigious difference between a shirt scrubbed in salt water, and one which has been washed in fresh. We all know the misery of putting on wet clothes, or sleeping in damp sheets. Now, a shirt washed in salt water is really a great deal worse than either; because, in the cases alluded to, one may apply to the fire or the sun, and remedy the evil at the cost of a little time and trouble; but in the wretched predicament of putting on salt-water-washed linen, no such process avails any thing. You first dry your unhappy shirt, by exposing it to the sun or the fire till it seems as free from moisture as any bone; you then put it on, in hopes of enjoying the benefit of clean linen. Alas, not a whit of enjoyment follows! For if the air be in a humid state, or you are exposed to exercise, the treacherous salt, which, when crystallised, has hidden itself in the fibres of the cloth, speedily deliquesces or melts, and you have all the tortures of being once more wrapped in moist drapery. In your agony, you pull it off, run to the galley-range, and toast it over again; or you hang it up in the fiery heat of the southern sun, and when not a particle of wet seems to remain, you draw it on a second time, fancying your job at last complete. But, miserable man! you are as ill off as ever; for the insidious enemy has merely retired out of sight, but still lurks so close, that no art we yet know of will expel him, save and except that of a good sound rinsing in fresh water.

Seeing, then, that hardly any discomfort can exceed what has been just described, I need scarcely add that there are few greater favours of the minor kind which a considerate captain may bestow on his crew, than giving them, whenever he possibly can, at least as much fresh water as will serve to carry off the abominable salt from their clothes, after they have first been well scoured in the water of the ocean. Even this small allowance is a great comfort on those occasions, when a sufficient quantity cannot be allowed for performing the whole operation of washing from first to last. By a judicious management of the ship's regular stock, and, above all, by losing no opportunity of catching rain water, either during these tropical showers, or upon ordinary occasions of wet weather, an officer of any activity, who really possesses a good feeling towards his people, need seldom be without the means of giving to each man of his crew a gallon twice a-week during the longest voyage.

It was from an old and excellent officer I first learned, that, by proper and constant care, this indulgence might almost always be granted. It is not easy, I freely admit, at all times, and in all climates, to keep a supply of washing-water on board; and under most circumstances, it certainly requires more personal exertion than those individuals are aware of, who have not given it their attention. But I feel persuaded that there does not exist an officer in the Navy who would not cheerfully take even a great deal more trouble, if once made fully sensible of the unspeakable comfort which this very reasonable indulgence affords to the men under his care. To those who hold the doctrine that sailors are by their nature ungrateful, and that it is useless to grant them advantages which are not absolutely necessary, these recommendations will appear trivial and absurd. But I trust the prevalence of such unworthy sentiments in the Navy is becoming less and less every day. Officers are now generally pretty well aware, that the alleged ingratitude of their men belongs fully more to unreasonable expectations on their own part, than to any want of feeling on that of their crew. A captain ought to do what is right and kind, simply because it is right and kind; and his conduct in this respect should not be influenced by the manner in which it is received; at all events, he may be certain, that if his favours be not well received, the fault lies in his manner of giving them. Sailors have the most acute penetration possible on these occasions; and if the captain be actuated by any petty motives of selfishness, or be prompted by any trashy desire to gain a flimsy popularity; in short, if his conduct be regulated by any wish except that of doing his duty uniformly and kindly, the Johnnies will see through it all, and either laugh at him or hate him, or both.

The art of granting a favour gracefully and usefully is one of far greater difficulty than is generally supposed; and as the command of a man-of-war is a grand school for its study, most truly happy shall I be if what I have said here or elsewhere shall induce a single brother-officer to turn his attention more earnestly than before to the domestic comforts of his people, one of the most delightful, and certainly one of the most useful branches of the arduous duties of a commander.

CHAPTER IX.

AQUATIC SPORTS.

One day, after we had lost the north-east Trade-wind, and when the fleet of China ships, with their companions, the two ships of war, were drifting about in the calm, more like logs of wood than anything else, a furious squall, unperceived till it reached us, swept through the fleet. These violent tornadoes are generally called white squalls, from being unattended by those black heavy rain clouds which usually accompany such transient blasts.

On the occasion of ordinary squalls, even with the advantage of the warning given by rising clouds, we find it not always easy to escape their force unhurt. If the wind be fair, we feel a natural reluctance to shorten sail, so as to lose any portion of the good which Fortune is sending us; or, at all events, we do not wish to commence shortening sail till the squall is so near that there

is an absolute necessity for doing so. It will, therefore, often happen that inexperienced officers are deceived by the unexpected velocity with which the gust comes down upon them. And even the oldest sailors, if navigating in regions with which they have not become actually acquainted, are apt to miscalculate the time likely to elapse before the wind can touch them. In these cases, unless the men are very active, the sails are generally torn, and sometimes a mast or a yard is carried away. It is, besides, so often doubtful whether there is to be any wind in the squall, or it is to prove merely a plump of rain, that there seem few points of distinction more remarkable between the seamanship of an old and a young officer, than their power of judging of this matter. To a man quite inexperienced, a squall may look in the highest degree threatening; he will order the top-gallant clew-lines to be manned, place hands by the top-sail haulyards, and lay along the main clew-garnets. His more experienced captain, however, being apprised of the squall's approach, steps on deck, takes a hasty look to windward, and says to his young friend, the officer of the watch, "Never mind, there's nothing in it, it's only rain; keep the sails on her."

And although the older authority, nine times in ten, proves correct in his judgment, he might find it difficult, or even impossible, to tell exactly upon what his confidence rested. Sailors boast, indeed, of having an infallible test by which the point in question may be ascertained, their secret being clothed in the following rhymes, so to call them:

> "If the rain's before the wind,
> 'Tis time to take the topsails in;
> If the wind's before the rain,
> Hoist your topsails up again."

By which we are taught to understand, that when the rain of a squall reaches the ship before the breeze which it contains, there will be danger in carrying on, and *vice versâ*. Some rule of this kind, adapted to the meridian of London, might perhaps save our good citizens many a sound ducking in Hyde Park of a Sunday afternoon; for I observe the crowd never take the slightest precaution till the squall is right upon them, and then it is too late.

The practical knowledge alluded to, however, which is sometimes called professional tact, comes not by rhymes, but by experience alone; and something akin to this, I presume, may be discovered in every calling. A painter, for example, might be utterly at a loss to communicate to a brother-artist the rules by which he has produced those effects, that he himself has flung as it were on the canvas, with a kind of intuitive confidence, scarcely conscious of effort. Many long and hard years of study, and myriads of forgotten trials, however, must have been gone through to give this enviable facility. So it is with seamanship, where it is so frequently indispensable to act with promptitude one way or the other.

No experience, however, can altogether guard against these sudden gusts or white squalls, since they make no show, except, sometimes, by a rippling of the water along which they are sweeping. On the occasion above alluded to, there was not even this faint warning. The first ships of the convoy touched by the blast were laid over almost on their beam-ends, but in the next instant righted again, on the whole of their sails being blown clean out of the bolt-ropes. The Theban frigate and the Volage, then lying nearly in the centre of the fleet, were the only ships which saved an inch of canvas. This was owing chiefly to our having so many more hands on board, compared to the Indiamen, but partly to our having caught sight of the ruin brought on the vessels near us, just in time to let fly the sheets and haulyards and get the yards down. But even then, with the utmost exertion of every man and boy on board, we barely succeeded in clewing all up, and preventing the sails from being blown to shreds.

When this hurricane of a moment had passed over us, and we had time to look round, not a rag was to be seen in the whole fleet; while the Wexford, a ship near us, had lost her three top-gallant masts and jib-boom, and, what was a far more serious misfortune, her fore-topmast was dangling over the bows. Part of the fore-topsail was wrapped like a shawl round the lee cat-head, while the rest hung down in festoons from the collar of the fore-stay to the spritsail yard-arm. A stout party of seamen from each of the men-of-war were sent to assist in clearing the wreck, and getting up fresh spars. A light fair wind having succeeded to the calm in which we had been lolling about for many days before this squall came on, we took our wounded bird in tow, and made all sail once more towards the equinox, as old Robinson Crusoe calls the equator. By this time, also, the China ships had bent a new gang of sails, and were fast resuming their old stations in the appointed order of bearing, which it was our policy to keep up strictly, together with as many other of the formalities of a fleet in line of battle and on a cruise as we could possibly maintain.

While we were thus stealing along pleasantly enough under the genial influence of this newly-found air, which as yet was confined to the upper sails, and every one was looking open-mouthed to the eastward to catch a gulp of cool air, or was congratulating his neighbour on getting rid of the tiresome calm in which we had been so long half-roasted, half-suffocated, about a dozen flying-fish rose out of the water, just under the fore-chains, and skimmed away to windward at the height of ten or twelve feet above the surface. I have already mentioned, that the longest flight of these singular fish is about an eighth of an English mile, or two hundred yards, which they perform in somewhat more than half a minute. These flights vary, from the extreme length mentioned above to a mere skip out of the water. Generally speaking, they fly to a considerable distance in a straight line in the wind's eye, and then gradually turn off to leeward. But sometimes the flying-fish merely skims the surface, so as to touch the tops of the successive waves, without rising and falling to follow the undulations of the sea. There is a prevalent idea afloat, but I know not how just it may be, that they can fly no longer than their wings or fins remain wet. That they rise as high as twenty feet out of the water is certain, from their being sometimes found in the channels of a line-of-battle ship; and they frequently fly into a 74 gun-ship's main-deck ports. On a frigate's forecastle and gangways, also, elevations which may be taken at eighteen or twenty feet, or more,

they are often found. I remember seeing one, about nine inches in length, and weighing not less, I should suppose, than half a pound, skim into the Volage's main-deck port just abreast of the gangway. One of the main-topmen was coming up the quarter-deck ladder at the moment, when the flying-fish, entering the port, struck the astonished mariner on the temple, knocked him off the step, and very nearly laid him sprawling.

I was once in a prize, a low Spanish schooner, not above two feet and a half out of the water, when we used to pick up flying-fish enough about the decks in the morning to give us a capital breakfast. They are not unlike whitings to the taste, though rather firmer, and very dry. They form, I am told, a considerable article of food for the negroes in the harbours of the West Indies. The method of catching them at night is thus described:—In the middle of the canoe a light is placed on the top of a pole, towards which object it is believed these fish always dart, while on both sides of the canoe a net is spread to a considerable distance, supported by out-riggers above the surface of the water; the fish dash at the light, pass it, and fall into the net on the other side.

Shortly after observing the cluster of flying-fish rise out of the water, we discovered two or three dolphins ranging past the ship, in all their beauty, and watched with some anxiety to see one of those aquatic chases of which our friends the Indiamen had been telling us such wonderful stories. We had not long to wait; for the ship, in her progress through the water, soon put up another shoal of these little things, which, as the others had done, took their flight directly to windward. A large dolphin, which had been keeping company with us abreast of the weather gangway at the depth of two or three fathoms, and, as usual, glistening most beautifully in the sun, no sooner detected our poor dear little friends take wing, than he turned his head towards them, and, darting to the surface, leaped from the water with a velocity little short, as it seemed, of a cannon-ball. But although the impetus with which he shot himself into the air gave him an initial velocity greatly exceeding that of the flying-fish, the start which his fated prey had got enabled them to keep ahead of him for a considerable time.

The length of the dolphin's first spring could not be less than ten yards; and after he fell, we could see him gliding like lightning through the water for a moment, when he again rose and shot forwards with considerably greater velocity than at first, and, of course, to a still greater distance. In this manner the merciless pursuer seemed to stride along the sea with fearful rapidity, while his brilliant coat sparkled and flashed in the sun quite splendidly. As he fell headlong on the water at the end of each huge leap, a series of circles were sent far over the still surface, which lay as smooth as a mirror; for the breeze, although enough to set the royals and top-gallant studding sails asleep, was hardly as yet felt below.

The group of wretched flying-fish, thus hotly pursued, at length dropped into the sea; but we were rejoiced to observe that they merely touched the top of the swell, and scarcely sunk in it, at least they instantly set off again in a fresh and even more vigorous flight. It was particularly interesting to observe that the direction they now took was quite different from the one in which they had set out, implying but too obviously that they had detected their fierce enemy, who was following them with giant steps along the waves, and now gaining rapidly upon them. His terrific pace, indeed, was two or three times as swift as theirs, poor little things!

The greedy dolphin, however, was fully as quick-sighted as the flying-fish which were trying to elude him; for whenever they varied their flight in the smallest degree, he lost not the tenth part of a second in shaping a new course, so as to cut off the chase; while they, in a manner really not unlike that of the hare, doubled more than once upon their pursuer. But it was soon too plainly to be seen that the strength and confidence of the flying-fish were fast ebbing. Their flights became shorter and shorter, and their course more fluttering and uncertain, while the enormous leaps of the dolphin appeared to grow only more vigorous at each bound. Eventually, indeed, we could see, or fancied we could see, that this skilful seasportsman arranged all his springs with such an assurance of success, that he contrived to fall, at the end of each, just under the very spot on which the exhausted flying fish were about to drop! Sometimes this catastrophe took place at too great a distance for us to see from the deck exactly what happened; but on our mounting high into the rigging, we may be said to have been in at the death; for then we could discover that the unfortunate little creatures, one after another, either popped right into the dolphin's jaws as they lighted on the water, or were snapped up instantly afterwards.

It was impossible not to take an active part with our pretty little friends of the weaker side, and accordingly we very speedily had our revenge. The middies and the sailors, delighted with the chance, rigged out a dozen or twenty lines from the jib-boom-end and spritsail yard-arms, with hooks baited merely with bits of tin, the glitter of which resembles so much that of the body and wings of the flying fish, that many a proud dolphin, making sure of a delicious morsel, leaped in rapture at the deceitful prize.

It may be well to mention, that the dolphin of sailors is not the fish so called by the ancient poets. Ours, which, I learn from the Encyclopædia, is the *Coryphæna hippurus* of naturalists, is totally different from their *Delphinus phocæna*, termed by us the porpoise. How these names have shifted places I know not; but there seems little doubt that the ancient dolphin of the poets, I mean that on the back of which Dan Arion took a passage when he was tossed overboard, is neither more nor less than our porpoise*. For the rest, he is a very poetical and pleasing fish to look at, affords excellent sport in catching, and, when properly dressed, is really not bad eating†.

* Ovid. Fasti, lib. ii. 117. Encyclopædia Britan. vol. v. p. 339.

† The following correction of the above paragraph has been sent me by a friend thoroughly conversant with Natural History and the Classics.

"The dolphin of the poets is not the *delphinus phocæna*, and is much more amiable, and personable too, than the gross porpesse, *porcus piscis, porco pesce, le marsouin, marswin, meerschwein, porcus maris;* a very different delphinus from *delphinus antiquorum* of Ray, *delphinus delphis* of Linné, the dolphin on whose back Dan Arion

It happened in a ship I commanded, that a porpoise was struck about half an hour before the cabin dinner; and I gave directions, as a matter of course, to my steward to dress a dish of steaks, cut well clear of the thick coating of blubber. It so chanced that none of the crew had ever before seen a fish of this kind taken, and in consequence there arose doubts amongst them whether or not it was good, or even safe eating. The word, however, being soon passed along the decks, that orders had been given for some slices of the porpoise to be cooked for the captain's table, a deputation from forward was appointed to proceed as near to the cabin door as the etiquettes of the service allowed, in order to establish the important fact of the porpoise being eatable. The dish was carried in, its contents speedily discussed, and a fresh supply having been sent for, the steward was, of course, intercepted in his way to the cook. "I say, Capewell," cried one of the hungry delegates, "did the captain really eat any of the porpoise?"

"Eat it!" exclaimed the steward, "look at that!" at the same time lifting off the cover, and showing a dish as well cleared as if it had previously been freighted with veal cutlets, and was now on its return from the midshipmen's birth.

"Ho! ho!" sung out Jack, running back to the forecastle; "if the skipper eats porpoise, I don't see why we should be nice; so here goes!" Then pulling forth the great clasp-knife which always hangs by a cord round the neck of a seaman, he plunged it into the sides of the fish, and, after separating the outside rind of blubber, detached half-a-dozen pounds of the red meat, which, in texture and taste, and in the heat of its blood, resembles beef, though very coarse. His example was so speedily followed by the rest of the ship's company, that when I walked forward, after dinner, in company with the doctor, to take the post-mortem view of the porpoise more critically than before, we found the whole had been broiled and eaten within half an hour after I had unconsciously given, by my example, an official sanction to the feast.

Porpoises almost invariably go in shoals, and sometimes in such vast numbers as to cover the whole visible extent of the sea. They appear to delight exceedingly in playing round a ship when one falls in their way; for they will even deviate from their own course, and accompany hers for some time; and such is their speed, that, however fast a vessel may be sailing, they can shoot ahead, dart athwart hause, and even go repeatedly round her, though her rate be ten knots an hour, and all apparently with the utmost ease. Their gambols on these occasions are sometimes very amusing. I have often seen them leap high out of the sea, and, while in the air, twirl themselves completely round. I am not quite sure that I have not observed them make what is called a summerset in the air, by turning tail over head. Their form appears very graceful when viewed in the water; and I remember, while a midshipman in the old Leander, on my first voyage (in 1802), being persuaded by one of the lieutenants that these porpoises were salmon—sea salmon, as he called them. This wag of an officer was one of the conspirators who so murderously took away the life of our favourite dog, poor dear Shakings.

The porpoises appear to have some very rapid method of communication amongst themselves; for they not only proceed in myriads in one straight course, but often amuse themselves by leaping in considerable numbers out of the water, with such perfect identity of time in all their movements, that on hearing them fall, we might fancy them but one fish. For hours at a time I have leaned over the gangway railing, when the ship has been going at the rate of ten or eleven miles, merely to watch them gliding alongside of us in pairs, leaping simultaneously out of the water. At night this companionship is always particularly striking; but most so when the sea, either from some inherent phosphorescent property, or from the presence of animalculæ, possesses the quality of giving out light upon being agitated. On such occasions, when the foam dashed off from the ship's bows resembles molten silver, and the train in her wake stretches far astern along the sea, like the tail of a comet across the sky, the track of the porpoise is likewise marked in the most beautiful style that can well be imagined. Besides trailing behind this long unbroken line of fire, each fish is surrounded by a sort of halo, or glow of bright bluish sparks; and the form of its head and body can then be distinctly seen, or even the slightest movement of the tail discovered fully better than in daylight. The lustre of this mysterious illumination is at times so great, that one may read off the seconds-hand of a watch by its help alone. Indeed, the light caused by the foam on the lee-side of a ship, when much pressed with sail, and the agitation of the water becomes considerable, often casts a distinct glow on the buige, or belly of the courses, and reaching as far up as the foot of the topsails, can almost be detected on the foot topgallant-sails in a very dark night.

There exists a popular belief amongst seamen, that the wind may be expected from the quarter to which a shoal of porpoises are observed to steer; but I suspect their capacity as meteorologists is about on a par with that of geese, the value of whose flights is held by many worthy and venerable matrons to be pretty nearly as well established as the fact of hogs actually seeing the wind. So far, however, from our respecting the speculations of these submarine philosophers, every art is used to drag them out of their native element, and to pass them through the fire to the insatiable Molochs of the lower decks and cockpits of His Majesty's ships, a race amongst whom the constant supply of the best provisions appears to produce only an increase of appetite.

One harpoon, at least, is always kept in readi-

took a passage; the dolphin so lauded by Athenæus, and the dolphin of Hippo, immortalised by Pliny (lib. ix. ep. 33). This, the true dolphin of the ancients, is more slender and more fleshy, though less be-blubbered, than *delphinus phocæna*; and, instead of having an obtuse snout, has a long, narrow, and pointed nose, not much unlike the beak of some birds; indeed Belon calls him '*l'oye de mer*.' His habits are much the same as those of the porpesse. In Elizabeth's time the flesh was reckoned a great delicacy; and old Caius (Jack Rugby's Caius) says that one which was taken in his time was thought a present worthy of the Duke of Norfolk, who distributed part of it among his friends. It was roasted and dressed with porpesse sauce, made of crumbs of fine wheat bread, mixed with vinegar and sugar."

ness for action in the fore part of the ship. The sharpest and strongest of these deadly weapons is generally stopped, or fastened, to the fore-tack bumpkin, a spar some ten or twelve feet long, projecting from the bows of a ship on each side like the horns of a snail, to which the tack or lower corner of the foresail is drawn down when the ship is on a wind. This spar, which affords good footing, not being raised many feet above the water, while it is clear of the bow, and very nearly over the spot where the porpoises glide past, when shooting across the ship's forefoot, is eagerly occupied by the most active and expert harpooner on board, as soon as the report has been spread that a shoal, or, as the sailors call it, a 'school' of porpoises, are round the ship. There is another favourite station which is speedily filled on these occasions; I mean, alongside of the slight-looking, but strong, and not ungraceful apparatus, projecting perpendicularly downwards from the end of the bowsprit. This spar is not inaptly called the dolphin-striker, from its appearing to dash into the waves as the ship pitches; perhaps it may have acquired its name on account of its being so capital a position from which to strike that fish. The lower end of the spar is connected with the outer end of the jib-boom by means of a stout rope, which, after passing through its extremity, extends to the ship; and it is upon this guy that the fortunate person who wields the harpoon fixes himself. Any picture of a ship will make this description intelligible; but it may assist the imagination to mention, that the purpose of this rope is to keep the end of the jib-boom from springing up, precisely as a martingal holds down the head of a horse; which analogy, no doubt, has led sailors to give the name of martingal-stay to the guy in question. The harpoon is a triangular, or rather a heart-shaped, barbed weapon, somewhat larger than a man's hand, and in the centre about as thick as his knuckles. Its point and edges are made of iron so soft that they can easily be brought to a rough edge by means of a file. Until I read Captain Scoresby's most interesting account of the arctic regions, I always fancied that the point of the whale harpoon, which is exactly the same as that used by us to take the porpoise, was made of steel; but he explains that it is left purposely soft, that it may be sharpened even by scraping it with a knife. This javelin-head, or, as it is technically called by whalers, the 'mouth,' is connected by a slender arm or shank, terminating in a socket. The barbed head, or mouth, is eight inches long, and six broad; the shank, with its socket, two feet and a half long. The shank is not quite half an inch in diameter; and as this part is liable to be forcibly and suddenly extended, twisted, and bent, it requires to be made of the toughest and most pliable iron.

"That kind," says Scoresby, "which is of the most approved tenacity is made of old horse-shoe nails, or stubs, which are formed into small rods, and two or three of these welded together; so that should a flaw happen to occur in any one of the rods, the strength of the whole might still be depended on. Some manufacturers enclose a quantity of stub-iron in a cylinder of best foreign iron, and form the shank of the harpoon out of a single rod. A test sometimes used for trying the sufficiency of a harpoon, is to wind its shank round a bolt of inch iron, in the form of a close spiral, then to unwind it again, and put it into a straight form. If it bears this without injury in the cold state, it is considered as excellent. The breaking of a harpoon is of no less importance than the value of a whale, which is sometimes estimated at 1000*l.* sterling. This consideration has induced many ingenious persons to turn their attention towards improving the construction and security of this instrument; but, though various alterations have been suggested, such as forming the shank of plies of wire, and adding one or two lateral barbs, they have all given place to the simplicity of the ancient harpoon*."

Having described the harpoon, we may resume our fishing operations, which possess a remarkable degree of interest when the shoal of porpoises is numerous. Half the ship's company are generally clustered about the bowsprit, the head, and any other spot commanding a good view of the sport. When a mid, I have often perched myself like a sea-bird at the fore-yard-arm, or nestled into the fore-topmast staysail netting, till I saw the harpoon cast with effect by some older and stronger arm. A piece of small, but stout line, called, I think, the foreganger, is spliced securely to the shank of the harpoon. To the end of this line is attached any small rope that lies handiest on the forecastle, probably the top-gallant clew-line, or the jib down-haul. The rope, before being made fast to the foreganger, is rove through a block attached to some part of the bowsprit, or to the foremost swifter of the fore-rigging; and a gang of hands are always ready to take hold of the end, and run the fish right out of the water when pierced by the iron.

The harpooner, it will be understood, has nothing to attend to but the mere act of striking his object; and there are few exploits in which the dexterity of one person is more conspicuous over that of another, than in delivering the harpoon. I have heard Captain Scoresby say, that when a whale is struck, it is an object of importance to drive the weapon socket-deep into the blubber, or outer rind, of the floating monster; but in the case of the porpoise, the true point of skill appears to lie in the aim alone; for the mere weight of the instrument, with its loaded staff, is sufficient to lodge the barbs in the body of the fish, and in many cases to carry it right through to the other side.

The strength of the porpoise must be very great, for I have seen him twist a whale harpoon several times round, and eventually tear himself off by main force. On this account, it is of consequence to get the floundering gentleman on board with the least possible delay after the fish is struck. Accordingly, the harpooner, the instant he has made a good hit, bawls out, "Haul away! haul away!" upon which the men stationed at the line run away with it, and the struggling wretch is raised high into the air, as if still in the act of performing one of his own gambols. Two or three of the smartest hands have in the mean time prepared what is called a running bowline knot, or noose, the nature of which may be readily described by saying that although it slips up, or renders, very easily, it is perfectly secure, without being subject to jamming, as that embarrassing entanglement is called when a knot or bend be-

* Scoresby's Arctic Regions, vol. ii. p. 225.

comes inextricably fixed. This running bowline, of which several are always previously made ready, is placed by hand round the body of the porpoise, or it may be cast, like the South American lasso, over its tail, and then, but not till then, can the capture be considered quite secure. I have seen many a gallant prize of this kind fairly transfixed with the harpoon, and rattled like a shot up to the block, where it was hailed by the shouts of the victors as the source of a certain feast, and yet lost after all, either by the line breaking, or the dart coming out during the vehement struggles of the fish.

I remember once seeing a porpoise accidentally struck by a minor description of fish-spear called a grains, a weapon quite inadequate for such a service. The cord by which it was held being much too weak, soon broke, and off dashed the wounded fish, right in the wind's eye, at a prodigious rate, with the staff erected on its back, like a signal-post. The poor wretch was instantly accompanied, or pursued, by myriads of his own species, whose instinct, it is said, teaches them to follow any track of blood, and even to devour their unfortunate fellow-fish. I rather doubt the fact of their cannibalism, but am certain that, whenever a porpoise is struck and escapes, he is followed by all the others, and the ship is deserted by the shoal in a few seconds. In the instance just mentioned, the grains with which the porpoise was struck had been got ready for spearing a dolphin; but the man in whose hands it happened to be, not being an experienced harpooneer, could not resist the opportunity of darting his weapon into the first fish that offered a fair mark.

The dolphin, the bonito, and the albacore, are sometimes caught with the grains, but generally by means of lines baited either with bits of tin, or with pieces of the flying-fish, when any are to be had. In fine weather, especially between the tropics, when the whole surface of the sea is often covered with them, a dozen lines are hung from the jib-boom end and sprit-sail yard, all so arranged, that when the ship sends forward, the hook, with its glittering bait, barely touches the water, but rises from it when the ship is raised up by the swell. The grains spoken of above resembles nothing so much that I know of as the trident which painters thrust into the hands of Daddy Neptune, when it pleases them to represent the god of the sea, sitting all ready for a swim (sans culottes, as he ought to be), in his dolphin-drawn cab. If my nautical recollections, however, serve me correctly, this spear has five prongs, not three, and sometimes there are two sets, placed in lines at right angles to one another. The upper end of the staff being loaded with lead, it falls down and turns over the fish, which is then drawn on board on the top of the grains, as a potato or a herring might be presented on the point of a fork.

The dolphin is eaten and generally relished by every one, though certainly a plaguy dry fish. It is often cut into slices and fried like salmon, or boiled and soused in vinegar, to be eaten cold. The bonito is a coarser fish, and becomes not very bad eating only by the copious use of port-wine. Anything, say the cooks, may be made palatable by rich sauces; a maxim we tried hard to illustrate in the midshipman's berth with such slender means as we possessed; and many a time have I feasted on what was but too correctly called mock-turtle soup, designated, in the choice dialect of the cockpit, Pig's-head negus.

On the 24th of May, the day before crossing the equator, I saw the grandest display of all these different kinds of fish which it has ever been my fortune to meet with. In my journal, written on that day, I find some things related, of which I have scarcely any recollection, and certainly have never again witnessed in the twenty years which have elapsed since. A bonito, it appears, darted out of the water after a flying-fish, open-mouthed, and so true was the direction of his leap, that he actually closed with the chase in the air, and sought to snap it up; but owing to some error in his calculation, the top of his head striking the object of pursuit, sent it spinning off in a direction quite different from that which his own momentum obliged him to follow. A number of those huge birds, the albatrosses, were soaring over the face of the waters, and the flying-fish, when rising into the air to avoid their natural enemies the dolphin and bonito, were frequently caught by these poaching birds, to the very reasonable disappointment of the sporting fish below, on whose manor they were trespassing. These intruders proceeded not altogether with impunity, however; for we hooked several of them, who, confident in their own sagacity and strength of wing, swooped eagerly at the baited hooks towed far astern of the ship, and were thus drawn on board, screaming and flapping their wings in a very ridiculous plight. To render this curious circle of mutual destruction quite complete, though it may diminish our sympathy for the persecuted flying-fish, I ought to mention, that on the same day one dropped on board in the middle of its flight, and in its throat another small fish was found half swallowed, but still alive!

All this may be considered, more or less, as mere sport, serving to relieve the tedium of a long calm, or contributing, in a small degree, to the scanty luxuries of the table on a protracted voyage. But in the capture of the shark, a less amiable, or, I may say, a more ferocious spirit is sure to prevail. There would seem, indeed, to be a sort of perpetual and hereditary war waged between sailors and sharks, like that said to exist between the Esquimaux and the Indians of North America, where, as each of the belligerents is under the full belief that every death, whether natural or violent, is caused by the machinations of the other side, there is no hope of peace between them, as long as the high conflicting parties shall be subject to the laws of mortality.

In like manner, I fear, that in all future times, as in all times past, when poor Jack falls overboard in Madras roads, or in Port Royal harbour, he will be liable to be crunched between the shark's quadruple or quintuple rows of serrated teeth, with as merciless a spirit of enjoyment as Jack repays the compliment withal, when, in his turn, he catches his enemy on his decks. Certainly, I have never seen the savage part of our nature peep out more clearly than upon these occasions, when a whole ship's company, captain, officers, and young gentlemen inclusive, shout in triumphant exultation over the body of a captive shark, floundering in impotent rage on the poop or forecastle. The capture always affords high and

peculiar sport, for it is one in which every person on board sympathises, and, to a certain extent, takes a share. Like a fox-chase, it is ever new, and draws within its vortex every description of person. The lunarian, busy taking distances, crams his sextant hastily into its case; the computer, working out his longitude, shoves his books on one side; the marine officer abandons his eternal flute; the doctor starts from his nap; the purser resigns the Complete Book; and every man and boy, however engaged, rushes on deck to see the villain die. Even the monkey, if there be one on board, takes a vehement interest in the whole progress of this wild scene. I remember once observing Jacko running backwards and forwards along the after-part of the poop hammock-netting, grinning, screaming, and chattering at such a rate, that, as it was nearly calm, he was heard all over the decks.

"What's the matter with you, Master Mona?" said the quarter-master; for the animal came from Teneriffe, and preserved his Spanish cognomen. Jacko replied not, but merely stretching his head over the railing, stared with his eyes almost bursting from his head, and by the intensity of his grin bared his teeth and gums nearly from ear to ear.

The sharp curved dorsal fin of a huge shark was now seen, rising about six inches above the water, and cutting the glazed surface of the sea by as fine a line as if a sickle had been drawn along.

"Messenger! run to the cook for a piece of pork," cried the captain, taking command with as much glee as if it had been an enemy's cruiser he was about to engage.

"Where's your hook, quarter-master?"

"Here, sir, here!" cried the fellow, feeling the point, and declaring it as sharp as any lady's needle, and in the next instant piercing with it a huge junk of rusty pork, weighing four or five pounds; for nothing, scarcely, is too large or too high in flavour for the stomach of a shark.

The hook, which is as thick as one's little finger, has a curvature about as large as that of a man's hand when half closed, and is from six to eight inches in length, with a formidable barb. This fierce-looking grappling-iron is furnished with three or four feet of chain, a precaution which is absolutely necessary; for a voracious shark will sometimes gobble the bait so deep into his stomach, that but for the chain, he would snap through the rope by which the hook is held, as easily as if he were nipping the head off an asparagus.

A good strong line, generally the end of the mizen-topsail-haulyards, being made fast to the chain, the bait is cast into the ship's wake; for it is very seldom so dead a calm that a vessel has not some small motion through the water. I think I have remarked, that at sea the sharks are most apt to make their appearance when the ship is going along at a rate of somewhat less than a mile an hour, a speed which barely brings her under command of the rudder, or gives her what is technically called steerage-way.

A shark, like a midshipman, is generally very hungry; but in the rare cases when he is not in good appetite, he sails slowly up to the bait, smells to it, and gives it a poke with his shovel-nose, turning it over and over. He then edges off to the right or left, as if he apprehended mischief, but soon returns again, to enjoy the delicious haut goût, as the sailors term the flavour of the damaged pork, of which a piece is always selected, if it can be found.

While this coquetry, or shyness, is exhibited by John Shark, the whole after-part of the ship is so clustered with heads, that not an inch of spare room is to be had for love or money. The rigging, the mizen-top, and even the gaff, out to the very peak; the hammock-nettings and the quarters, almost down to the counter, are stuck over with breathless spectators, speaking in whispers, if they venture to speak at all, or can find leisure for any thing but fixing their gaze on the monster, who as yet is free to roam the ocean, but who, they trust, will soon be in their power. I have seen this go on for an hour together; after which the shark has made up his mind to have nothing to say to us, and either swerved away to windward, if there be any breeze at all, or dived so deep that his place could be detected only by a faint touch or flash of white many fathoms down. The loss of a Spanish galleon in chase, I am persuaded, could hardly cause more bitter regret, or call forth more intemperate expressions of anger and impatience, than the failure in hooking a shark is always sure to produce on board a ship at sea.

On the other hand, I suppose the first symptom of an enemy's flag coming down in the fight was never hailed with greater joy than is felt by a ship's crew on the shark turning round to seize the bait. The preparatory symptoms of this intention are so well known to every one on board, that, the instant they begin to appear, a greedy whisper of delight passes from mouth to mouth amongst the assembled multitude; every eye is lighted up, and such as have not bronzed their cheeks by too long exposure to sun and wind to betray any change of colour, may be seen to alter their hue from pale to red, and back to pale again, like the tints on the sides of the dying dolphin.

It is supposed by seamen that the shark must of necessity turn on his back before he can bite anything; and, generally speaking, he certainly does so turn himself before he takes the bait. But this arises from two circumstances; one of them accidental and belonging to the particular occasion, the other arising out of the peculiar conformation and position of his mouth. When a bait is towed astern of a ship that has any motion through the water at all, it is necessarily brought to the surface, or nearly so. This of course obliges the shark to bite at it from below; and as his mouth is placed under his chin, not over it, like that of a Christian, he must turn nearly on his back before he can seize the floating piece of meat in which the hook is concealed. Even if he does not turn completely round, he is forced to slue himself, as it is called, so far as to show some portion of his white belly. The instant the white skin flashes on the sight of the expectant crew, a subdued cry, or murmur of satisfaction, is heard amongst the crowd; but no one speaks, for fear of alarming the shark.

Sometimes, the very instant the bait is cast over the stern, the shark flies at it with such eagerness, that he actually springs partially out of the water. This, however, is rare. On these occasions he gorges the bait, the hook, and a foot or

two of the chain, without any mastication or delay, and darts off with its treacherous prize with such prodigious velocity and force, that it makes the rope crack again as soon as the whole coil is drawn out. But in general he goes more leisurely to work, and seems rather to suck in the bait than to bite at it. Much dexterity is required in the hand which holds the line at this moment; for a bungler is apt to be too precipitate, and to jerk away the hook before it has got far enough down the shark's maw. Our greedy friend, indeed, is never disposed to relinquish what may once have passed his formidable batteries of teeth; but the hook, by a premature tug of the line, may fix itself in a part of the jaw so weak, that it gives way in the fierce struggle which always follows. The secret of the sport is, to let the voracious monster gulp down the huge mess of pork, and then to give the rope a violent pull, by which the barbed point, quitting the edge of the bait, buries itself in the coats of the victim's throat or stomach. As the shark is not a personage to submit patiently to such treatment, it will not be well for any one whose foot happens to be accidentally on the coil of the rope, for, when the hook is first fixed, it spins out like the log-line of a ship going twelve knots.

The suddenness of the jerk with which the poor devil is brought up, when he has reached the length of his tether, often turns him quite over on the surface of the water. Then commence the loud cheers, taunts, and other sounds of rage and triumph, so long suppressed. A steady pull is insufficient to carry away the line; but it sometimes happens that the violent struggles of the shark, when too speedily drawn up, snaps either the rope or the hook, and so he gets off, to digest the remainder as he best can. It is, accordingly, held the best practice to play him a little, with his mouth at the surface, till he becomes somewhat exhausted. During this operation, one could almost fancy the enraged animal is conscious of the abuse which is showered upon him; for, as he turns, and twists, and flings himself about, his eye glares upwards with a ferocity of purpose which makes the blood tingle in a swimmer's veins, as he thinks of the hour when it may be his turn to writhe under the tender mercies of his sworn foe!

No sailor, therefore, ought ever to think of hauling a shark on board merely by the rope fastened to the hook; for, however impotent his struggles may generally be in the water, they are rarely unattended with risk when the rogue is drawn half-way up. To prevent the line breaking, or the hook snapping, or the jaw being torn away, the device formerly described, of a running bowline knot, is always adopted. This noose, being slipped down the rope, and passed over the monster's head, is made to jam at the point of junction of the tail with the body. When this is once fixed, the first act of the piece is held to be complete, and the vanquished enemy is afterwards easily drawn over the taffrail and flung on the deck, to the unspeakable delight of all hands. But although the shark is out of his element, he has by no means lost his power of doing mischief; and I would advise no one to come within range of the tail, or thrust his toes too near the animal's mouth. The blow of a tolerably large-sized shark's tail might break a man's leg; and I have seen a three-inch hide tiller-rope bitten more than half-through, full ten minutes after the wretch had been dragged about the quarter-deck, and had made all his victors keep at the most respectful distance. I remember hearing the late Dr. Wollaston, with his wonted ingenuity, suggest a method for measuring the strength of a shark's bite. If a smooth plate of lead, he thought, were thrust into the fish's mouth, the depth which his teeth should pierce the lead would furnish a sort of scale of the force exerted.

I need scarcely mention, that when a shark is floundering about, the quarter-deck becomes a scene of pretty considerable confusion; and if there be blood on the occasion, as there generally is, from all this rough usage, the stains are not to be got rid off without a week's scrubbing, and many a growl from the captain of the after-guard. For the time, however, all such considerations are superseded; that is to say, if the commander himself takes an interest in the sport, and he must be rather a spoony skipper that does not. If he be indifferent about the fate of the shark, it is speedily dragged forward to the forecastle, amidst the kicks, thumps, and execrations of the conquerors, who very soon terminate his miserable career by stabbing him with their knives, boarding-pikes, and tomahawks, like so many wild Indians.

The first operation is always to deprive him of his tail, which is seldom an easy matter, it not being at all safe to come too near; but some dextrous hand, familiar with the use of the broad axe, watches for a quiet moment, and at a single blow severs it from the body. He is then closed with by another, who leaps across the prostrate foe, and with an adroit cut rips him open from snout to tail, and the tragedy is over, so far as the struggles and sufferings of the principal actor are concerned. There always follows, however, the most lively curiosity on the part of the sailors to learn what the shark has got stowed away in his inside; but they are often disappointed, for the stomach is generally empty. I remember one famous exception, indeed, when a very large fellow was caught on board the Alceste, in Anjeer Roads at Java, when we were proceeding to China with the embassy under Lord Amherst. A number of ducks and hens which had died in the night, were, as usual, thrown overboard in the morning, besides several baskets, and many other minor things, such as bundles of shavings and bits of cordage: all which were found in this huge sea-monster's inside. But what excited most surprise and admiration was the hide of a buffalo, killed on board that day for the ship's company's dinner. The old sailor who had cut open the shark stood with a foot on each side, and removed the articles one by one from the huge cavern into which they had been indiscriminately drawn. When the operator came at last to the buffalo's skin, he held it up before him like a curtain, and exclaimed—"There, my lads! d'ye see that? He has swallowed a buffalo; but he could not dis-gest the hide!"

I have never been so unfortunate as to see a man bitten by a shark, though, in calm weather, it is usual to allow the people to swim about the ship. It would seem that they are disturbed by the splashing and other noises of so many persons,

and keep at a distance; for although they are often observed near the ship both before and after the men have been bathing, they very rarely come near the swimmers. I remember once, indeed, at Bermuda, seeing a shark make a grab at a midshipman's heel, just as he was getting into the boat alongside. This youngster, who, with one or two others, had been swimming about for an hour, was the last of the party in the water. No shark had been seen during the whole morning; but just as he was drawing his foot into the boat, the fish darted from the bottom. Fortunately for my old messmate, there was no time for the shark to make the half-turn of the body necessary to bring his mouth to bear; and thus my friend escaped, by half an inch, a fate which, besides its making one shudder to think of, would have deprived the service of an active young officer, now deservedly in the higher ranks of his profession.

CHAPTER X.

A MAN OVERBOARD!

THE strange and almost savage ceremonies used at sea on crossing the equator have been so often described, that a voyager, at this time of day, may be well excused for omitting in his narrative any minute account of such wild proceedings.

If the circumstances which a traveller falls in with abroad happen to be essentially curious in themselves, or if they be characteristic of any particular set of men, or stage of manners, it does not seem to matter where the scenes are laid, nor how often they have been described. Perhaps it may even prove, that when things are possessed of much intrinsic interest, the very multiplicity of previous descriptions will rather help than stand in the way of subsequent accounts, provided these be written with a degree of skill worthy of the subject. If, indeed, such things, no matter how well known to us, can once more be brought home, as it is well called, to the feeling and understanding of the reader, by some of those graphic touches which are not the result of chance, but which *true* artists *alone* can command; and if the subject he has got hold of be good in itself, it will generally be all the better for the last writer that it should have been marred by previous daubers. We may even, I think, go further, and assert, that in the case supposed, it will be in favour of the writer who knows what he is about that his topic should have been not only repeatedly but well treated by previous authors. Who can doubt, for instance, that the Diary of an Invalid owes its chief interest to the hackneyed nature of the topic? We are enchanted to recognise incidents and scenes the most familiar to our thoughts trimmed up for fresh inspection by a scholar and a gentleman, who, to much knowledge of his subject, and of the world generally, superadds a rare felicity of expression, and the happy knack of giving new interest to all he touches, especially to those things with which we are already most familiarly acquainted.

On the same grounds, if a man of genius, minute and varied local information, and correct taste, were to write a book, and call it "London," it would assuredly outrun in freshness of interest, in the opinion even of the Londoners themselves, all other books of travels. Whatever talents, in short, an author may possess, their most touching and popular exercise will generally be found to lie in those departments with which his readers are most familiar. When Taglioni descends from her pirouettes, and dances the Minuet de la Cour or the Gavotte, or Paganini leaves off his miracles of sound, and plays some simple air which is well known to every one, we feel, not indeed the same astonishment as before, but ten times more real pleasure. Thus, too, such a novel as Pride and Prejudice probably derives its greatest charm from the characters and incidents being such as we are already well acquainted with, either from personal observation, or from a thousand previous descriptions.

Many writers, however, fall into the mistake of imagining that everything will bear this degree of handling, and forget that, while the ductility of fine gold is almost infinite, every other metal has its limit. This analogy will hold in all the fine arts, and perhaps in none more than in the art of composition, whether in prose or verse. When will the poets exhaust the good old topics of love and beauty? or painters fail to discover in mountain scenery, and in the sunsets of summer, varieties of tints, and lights, and shades, far beyond all their power of colouring? On the other hand, has not the whole strength of one celebrated school of painting been unequal to impart true interest and what has been termed graceful pleasure to vulgar images? Has not even the mighty Childe Harold compelled us to withdraw much of our respect for his genius by seeking to describe what is essentially vicious and degrading?

It is on this account, I suspect (to go from great things to small), that no author, except perhaps one, whom I have ever had the fortune to meet with, has contrived to impart the smallest degree of genuine interest to those absurd scenes which take place on board ship when crossing the line. The whole affair, indeed, is preposterous in its conception, and, I must say, rather brutal in its execution. Notwithstanding all this, however, I have not only permitted it to go on in ships which I commanded, but have even encouraged it, and set it agoing, when the men themselves were in doubt. Its evil is transient, if any evil there be; while it certainly affords Jack a topic for a month beforehand and a fortnight afterwards; and if so ordered as to keep its monstrosities within the limits of strict discipline (which is easy enough), it may even be made to add to the authority of the officers, instead of weakening their influence.

I am hardly classic enough to compare these equatorial shaving matches, as they are called, with the Saturnalia of Rome; but I know that some crews are most improperly permitted by the captain, even in ships of war, to take great liberties with the officers. So far, indeed, had this grown into a custom, that I can perfectly well remember the time when such licence was regarded almost as a right by the sailors. In many merchant-vessels, and even in some regular East India ships, it is still, I believe, more or less, so considered; but I should hope that in no ship of war, having

the smallest pretensions to good order, would any such doctrine be now maintained; or if asserted, as it sometimes is, by one party, would it not be instantly and peremptorily denied? There is, perhaps, some advantage in making naval seamen feel that they are living under a very different regime from what they have been accustomed to in the merchant service; and if, in the wildest stages of these extravagant proceedings, when they are grating the skin from off one another's faces, sousing the unfortunate novices in tubs of dirty water, and kicking up the most Cherokee sort of antics, they can still be made to respect the authority even of the littlest boy on board who wears a uniform, they will certainly be less likely to depart from established usage at other seasons, when not so excited.

In a well-regulated ship, within one hour from the time when these scenes of riot are at their height, order is restored, the decks are washed and swabbed up, the wet things are hung on the clothes' lines between the masts to dry; and the men, dressed in clean trousers and duck frocks, are assembled at their guns for muster, as soberly and sedately as if nothing had happened to discompose the decorous propriety of the ship's discipline. The middies, in like manner, may safely be allowed to have their own share of this rough fun, provided they keep as clear of their immediate superiors as the ship's company keep clear of the young gentlemen. And I must do the population of the cockpit the justice to say, that when they fairly set about it, maugre their gentlemanlike habits, aristocratical sprinklings, and the march of intellect to boot, they do contrive to come pretty near to the honest folks before the mast in the article of ingenious ferocity. The captain, of course, and, generally speaking, all the officers, keep quite aloof, pocketing up their dignity with vast care, and ready, at a moment's warning, to repress any undue familiarity. As things proceed, however, one or two of the officers may possibly become so much interested in the sky-larking scenes going forward, as to approach a little too near, and laugh a little too loud, consistently with the preservation of the dignity of which they were so uncommonly chary at first starting. It cannot be expected, and indeed is not required, that the chief actors in these wild gambols, stripped to the buff, and shying buckets of water at one another, should be confined within very narrow limits in their game. Accordingly, some mount the rigging to shower down their cascades, while others squirt the fire-engine from unseen corners upon the head of the unsuspecting passenger. And if it so chances (I say chances) that any one of the 'commissioned knobs' of the ship shall come in the way of these explosions, it is served out to him like a thunder-storm, 'all accidentally,' of course. Well; what is he to do? He feels that he has indiscreetly trusted himself too far; and even if he has not actually passed the prescribed line, still he was much too near it, and the offence is perhaps unintentional. At all events, it is of too trifling a nature; and, under the peculiar circumstances of the moment, to make a complaint to the captain would be ridiculous. Having, therefore, got his jacket well wet, and seeing the ready means of revenging himself in kind, he snatches up a bucket, and, forgetting his dignity, hurls the contents in the face of the mid who had given him a sousing but two seconds before! From that moment his commission goes for nothing, and he becomes, for the time being, one of the biggest Billy boys amongst them. The captain, observing him in this mess, shrugs his shoulders, walks aft, muttering, "It's all your own fault, Mr. Hailtop; you've put yourself amongst these mad younkers; see how they'll handle you!"

Nothing, I confess, now looks to me more completely out of character with our well-starched discipline than a 'staid lieutenant' romping about the booms, skulling up the rigging, blowing the grampus, and having it blown upon him by a parcel of rattle-pated reefers. But I remember well in the Volage being myself so gradually seduced by this animating spectacle of fun, that, before I knew where I was, I had crossed the rope laid on the deck as a boundary between order and disorder, and received a bucket of cold water in each ear, while the spout of a fire-engine, at the distance of two feet, was playing full in my eyes. On turning my head round to escape these cataracts, and to draw breath, a tar-brush was rammed half-way down my throat!

Far different was the scene, and very different, of course, my deportment, four or five years afterwards on the same spot, when, instead of being the junior lieutenant, I was the great gun of all, the mighty master-knob of the whole party, that is to say, the captain himself. I was then in command of the Lyra, a 10-gun sloop-of-war; and after the shaving operations were over, and all things put once more in order, I went on board the Alceste frigate to dine with my excellent friend and commanding officer, the late Sir Murray Maxwell. Lord Amherst, the ambassador to China, was on board, and in great glee with the sight of what had been enacted before him; for although, as I have always said, these scenes are not of a nature to bear agreeable description, they certainly are amusing enough to see—for once.

We soon sat down to dinner; and there was, of course, a great deal of amusement in telling the anecdotes of the day, and describing Father Neptune's strange aspect, and his still stranger-looking family and attendants. I ventured to back one of my figures against all or any of theirs, if not for monstrosity, at least for interest of another kind. Our dripping Neptune in the Lyra was accompanied, as usual, by a huge she-monster representing Amphitrite, being no other than one of the boatswain's mates dressed up with the main-hatchway tarpaulin for a cloak, the jolly-boat's mizen for a petticoat, while two half-wet swabs furnished her lubberly head with ringlets. By her side sat a youth, her only son Triton, a morsel of submarine domestic history ascertained by reference previously made to Lempriere's Dictionary. This poor little fellow was a great pet amongst the crew of the brig, and was indeed suspected to be entitled by birth to a rank above his present station, so gentle and gentlemanlike he always appeared. Even on this occasion, when disfigured by paint, pitch, and tar, copiously daubed over his delicate person to render him fit company for his papa old Neptune, he still looked as if his ill-favoured parents had stolen him, and

were trying in vain to disguise their roguery by rigging him up in their own gipsy apparel.

It was very nearly dark when I rowed back to the Lyra, which had been hanging for the last half hour on the frigate's weather-quarter, at the distance of a cable's length, watching for my return. The wind was so light, and the brig so close, that no signal was made to heave to; indeed I had scarcely rowed under the Alceste's stern, on my way back, before it was necessary to call out, "In bow!" The rattle of the oar on the thwarts gave the earliest notice of my approach to the people on board the little vessel, and I could hear the first lieutenant exclaim in haste, "Attend the side! Where are the side's-men?"

Scarcely had these words been spoken, when I heard a splash in the water, followed by a faint cry of distress and despair. In the next instant the brig was hove about, and the stern-boat lowered down, accompanied by all the hurried symptoms of a man having fallen overboard. I made the people in the boat tug at their oars towards the spot; but though we pulled over and over the ship's wake twenty times, the water was everywhere unruffled and unmarked by any speck. At length I rowed on board, turned the hands up to muster, to ascertain who was gone, and found all present but our poor little Triton! It appeared that the lad, who was one of the side's-men, fatigued with the day's amusement, had stretched himself in the fore-part of the quarter-deck hammock-netting, and gone to sleep. The sharp voice of the officer, on seeing the gig almost alongside, had roused the unhappy boy too suddenly; he quite forgot where he was, and, instead of jumping in-board, plunged into the sea, never to rise again!

There are few accidents more frequent at sea than that of a man falling overboard; and yet, strange to say, whenever it happens, it takes every one as completely by surprise as if such a thing had never occurred before. What is still more unaccountable, and, I must say, altogether inexcusable, is the fact of such an incident invariably exciting a certain degree of confusion, even in well-regulated ships. If this evil be remediable, it is really very curious that such a reproach should be allowed to continue, in the midst of a system of discipline so exact as that of the Navy, in which almost every other contingency is foreseen and carefully provided for; and it is highly reprehensible, to say the least of it, because it leads to the unnecessary loss of many lives. If the state of confusion, doubt, and alarm, which generally takes place, especially at night, when a man falls overboard, were the necessary consequence of the accident, we should merely lament it as an additional source of regret, and only consider a sea-life still more dangerous than it is generally reckoned to be. In point of fact, however, there seems to be no technical and inevitable necessity whatever for the occurrence of this disorder; and if the remedy be quite within the reach of ordinary discipline, it can hardly be denied, I should conceive, that an officer who neglects to make such application of the means in his power, has the life of any man to answer for, who falls overboard and is drowned; that is to say, if his loss can be traced less to the accident itself than to the want of some previously established and systematic arrangement suited to the peculiarities of an occurrence of such frequency.

After all that has been said of the exact nature of a man-of-war's discipline, and the degree of foresight, preparation, and habits of resource, which enable officers to act promptly and vigorously in the midst of difficulties, it is truly wonderful to see men of experience so completely at a loss as the oldest officers sometimes are, when the cry is given that a man is overboard. I have beheld brave and skilful men, who could face, unmoved, any other sort of danger, stand quite aghast on such occasions, and seem to lose all their faculties just at the moment of greatest need. But although it be difficult to explain this, it is quite easy to understand how the ship's company should be thrown into confusion at such moments, if their officers are at a loss. Whenever I have witnessed the tumultuous rush of the people from below, their eagerness to crowd into the boats, and the reckless devotion with which they fling themselves into the water to save their companions, I could not help thinking that it was no small disgrace to us, to whose hands the whole arrangements of discipline are confided, that we had not yet fallen upon any method of availing ourselves to good purpose of so much generous activity.

Sailors are men of rough habits, but their feelings are not by any means so coarse; and if they possess little prudence or worldly consideration, they are likewise very free from selfishness; generally speaking, too, they are much attached to one another, and will make great sacrifices to their messmates or shipmates when opportunities occur. A very little address on the part of the officers, as I have before hinted, will secure an extension of these kindly sentiments to the quarter-deck. But what I was alluding to just now was the cordiality of the friendships which spring up between the sailors themselves, who, it must be recollected, have no other society, and all, or almost all, whose ordinary social ties have been broken across either by the chances of war, or by the stern decrees which, I fear, will always render impressment absolutely unavoidable, or by the very nature of their roving and desultory life, which carries them they really know not where, and care not wherefore.

I remember once, when cruising off Terceira in the Endymion, that a man fell overboard and was drowned. After the usual confusion, and long search in vain, the boats were hoisted up, and the hands called to make sail. I was officer of the forecastle, and on looking about to see if all the men were at their stations, missed one of the foretop-men. Just at that moment I observed some one curled up, and apparently hiding himself under the bow of the barge, between the boat and the booms. "Hillo!" I said, "who are you? What are you doing here, you skulker? Why are you not at your station?"

"I am not skulking, sir," said the poor fellow, the furrows in whose bronzed and weather-beaten cheek were running down with tears. The man we had just lost had been his messmate and friend, he told me, for ten years. I begged his pardon in full sincerity, for having used such harsh words to him at such a moment, and bid him go below to his berth for the rest of the day.

"Never mind, sir, never mind," said the kind-hearted seaman, "it can't be helped. You meant no harm, sir. I am as well on deck as below. Bill's gone, sir, but I must do my duty."

So saying, he drew the sleeve of his jacket twice or thrice across his eyes, and mustering his grief within his breast, walked to his station as if nothing had happened.

In the same ship, and nearly about the same time, the people were bathing alongside in a calm at sea. It is customary on such occasions to spread a studding-sail on the water, by means of lines from the fore and main yard-arms, for the use of those who either cannot swim, or who are not expert in this art, so very important to all seafaring people. Half-a-dozen of the ship's boys, youngsters sent on board by that admirable and most patriotic of naval institutions, the Marine Society, were floundering about in the sail, and sometimes even venturing beyond the leech rope. One of the least of these urchins, but not the least courageous of their number, when taunted by his more skilful companions with being afraid, struck out boldly beyond the prescribed bounds. He had not gone much further than his own length, however, along the surface of the fathomless sea, when his heart failed him, poor little man! and along with his confidence away also went his power of keeping his head above water. So down he sank rapidly, to the speechless horror of the other boys, who, of course, could lend the drowning child no help.

The captain of the forecastle, a tall, fine-looking, hard-a-weather fellow, was standing on the shank of the sheet anchor, with his arms across, and his well-varnished canvas hat drawn so much over his eyes that it was difficult to tell whether he was awake, or merely dozing in the sun, as he leaned his back against the fore-topmast backstay. The seaman, however, had been attentively watching the young party all the time, and, rather fearing that mischief might ensue from their rashness, he had grunted out a warning to them from time to time, to which they paid no sort of attention. At last he desisted, saying they might drown themselves if they had a mind, for never a bit would he help them. But no sooner did the sinking figure of the adventurous little boy catch his eye, than, diver-fashion, he joined the palms of his hands over his head, inverted his position in one instant, and urging himself into swifter motion by a smart push with his feet against the anchor, shot head foremost into the water. The poor lad sunk so rapidly that he was at least a couple of fathoms under the surface before he was arrested by the grip of the sailor, who soon rose again, bearing the bewildered boy in his hand, and, calling to the other youngsters to take better care of their companion, chucked him right into the belly of the sail in the midst of the party. The fore-sheet was hanging in the calm, nearly into the water, and by it the dripping seaman scrambled up again to his old berth on the anchor, shook himself like a great Newfoundland dog, and then, jumping on the deck, proceeded across the forecastle to shift his clothes.

At the top of the ladder he was stopped by the marine officer, who had witnessed the whole transaction, as he sat across the gangway hammocks, watching the swimmers, and trying to get his own consent to undergo the labour of undressing and dressing. Said the soldier to the sailor, "That was very well done of you, my man, and right well deserves a glass of grog. Say so to the gun-room steward as you pass; and tell him it is my orders to fill you out a stiff norwester."

The soldier's offer was kindly meant, but rather clumsily timed, at least so thought Jack; for though he inclined his head in acknowledgment of the attention, and instinctively touched his hat, when spoken to by an officer, he made no reply, till out of the marine's hearing, when he laughed, or rather chuckled out to the people near him, "Does the good gentleman suppose I'll take a glass of grog for saving a boy's life?"

It is surely very odd that there should ever be such a thing as a sailor who cannot swim. And it is still more marvellous that there should be found people who actually maintain that a sailor who cannot swim has a better chance than one who can. This is really a paradox so outrageous, that, on writing it down, I feel almost humiliated to think how often I have heard it maintained by officers in whose hands the country has intrusted many valuable lives. This strange doctrine, as may well be supposed, derives but slender support from any well-established facts. It is merely asserted that, on some occasions of shipwreck, the boldest swimmers have been lost in trying to reach the shore, when they might have been saved had they staid by the ship. This may be true enough in particular cases, and yet the general position grounded upon it utterly absurd. The most skilful horsemen sometimes break their necks, but this is hardly adduced as an argument against learning to ride.

Without, however, discussing such nonsensical points, it cannot surely be denied by any rational person, that the art of swimming must be of great value to every man who lives on the water, and who is liable at any moment to tumble overboard, to be upset in a boat, or to be placed in situations where, but for this power, he might perish of want or cold; or, which is more important still, he might be unable to save others from such a fate. Obvious though all this be, but little pains are generally taken by captains to see that their people learn to swim. I suppose there is not an officer in the service, certainly not one who has reached the rank just named, who has not seen many men drowned, solely from not being able to swim; that is, because they had not learned a very simple art, of which, under his official injunctions, and aided by due encouragement, they might readily have acquired a sufficient knowledge. My own conscience, I am much ashamed to say, is not quite clear on this score, whatever that of my brother-officers may be; and certainly, when I again take the command of a ship, I shall use every exertion, and take advantage of every opportunity, at sea or in harbour, to encourage the men and officers to acquire this invaluable accomplishment. Would it be unreasonable to refuse the rating of A. B. (able seaman) on the ship's books to any man who could not swim? If it be our duty to ascertain that a sailor can 'hand, reef, and steer,' before we place against his name these mystical letters, might we not well superadd, as a qualification, that he should also be able to keep his head above water, in the event of falling overboard, or that

he should have it in his power to save another's life, if required to leap into the sea for that purpose by the orders of his superior? At present, in such an emergency, an officer has to ask amongst a dozen persons, "Which of you can swim?" instead of saying to the one nearest him, "Jump overboard after that man who is sinking!"

This, then, seems the first material step in the establishment of an improved system in that branch of seamanship which relates to picking up men who fall overboard. I call it the first step, because it will obviously have a direct tendency to lessen the horror and alarm which such an accident must always excite, and which nothing can ever quite remove, even were that desirable. There can be no doubt, indeed, that highly-excited feelings always stand in the way of exact discipline, and especially of that prompt, hearty, and thoroughly confiding obedience to the officer under whose orders we are serving. Such obedience is necessary on this occasion, above all others (except, perhaps, that of the ship being on fire), and is essentially required, in order to accomplish the purpose in view.

Different officers will, of course, devise different plans for the accomplishment of the same end. But I should expect all reflecting persons to agree in one or two points; such, for instance, as the following: that every officer, man, and boy, on board, should be perfectly aware beforehand of what his particular duty is when the alarm of a man being overboard is given; that he should know precisely not only where to go, but what to do when he reaches his station; and, above all, that he should not presume to exceed the measure of his appointed duty, unless expressly ordered by his superior. Every one who has been exposed to the misery of seeing a man fall overboard must remember that by far the greatest difficulty was to keep people back, there being always ten times as many persons as are required, not only ready, but eager to place themselves in the situations of greatest risk. In executing the duties of a ship-of-war, there should never be any volunteering allowed, either on this, or on any other occasion. Every man ought to have a specific duty, or a set of duties, to perform at all times. But these duties, in the case of a man falling overboard, must, of course, vary with the hour of the day or night, with the circumstance of its being the starboard or the larboard watch on deck, with the weather being fine or tempestuous, or with the course the ship is steering relatively to the wind, the quantity of sail, and so on. All these varieties, therefore, ought, as far as possible, to be the subject of distinct and repeated explanation. That is to say, the crew of every ship should be exercised or drilled, if not as frequently, at least as specifically, in the methods of picking up a man, as they are trained in the exercise of the great guns and small arms, or in that of reefing topsails.

I hope I shall not be misunderstood as laying down any scale of comparison between the importance of these different exercises; but I feel well assured that every experienced officer will agree with me, that by no other method except carefully stationing the men, and now and then practising them at those stations, can we ever hope to prevent the disgraceful confusion and noise which at present almost always occur when a man falls overboard. Whatever be the nature of the proposed exercise, the people should never be taken by surprise, or cheated into the belief that a man really has fallen into the water; for the feelings which such an incident excites are not of a description to be trifled with. Notice, indeed, should be formally given, that no false alarm will ever be sounded; but when it is determined to go through the manœuvre in question, intimation may usefully be circulated beforehand, that at such and such hours it will be practised, or a peculiar pipe by the boatswain might prepare the people for the evolution. When all was ready, something might be dropped overboard on purpose, and the exercise would then commence. At first, there would probably be no small degree of confusion and loss of time; but, surely, this would afford the most forcible practical evidence of the necessity of such drilling. When, by sufficient practice, the people had been rendered tolerably familiar with their duty in the day-time, or in fine weather, it might be then tried at night, or in a gale of wind. If they learned quickly all that was right to be done, there would be little trouble, and no great loss of time; but if, on the contrary, it cost much pains and a considerable interval to teach them how to conduct themselves to the best purpose, under the supposed circumstances, that would only show how much more necessary these precautions really were than officers generally imagine them to be.

Having said thus much to expose the evil, and to allude in general terms to the remedy, I feel bound to contribute likewise, as far as I am able, towards the practical details of the subject. I shall do so, however, with the most sincere diffidence; for the truth is, I have not studied so much as perhaps I ought to have done, what is called the seamanship part of my profession, but have, I fear, allowed both its scientific and more popular branches to engage a disproportionate share of my attention.

Every one who has been much at sea must remember the peculiar sounds which pervade a ship when a man is known to have fallen overboard. The course steered is so suddenly altered, that as she rounds to, the effect of the sails is doubled; the creaking of the tiller-ropes and rudder next strike the ear: then follows the pitter-patter of several hundred feet in rapid motion, producing a singular tremor, fore and aft. In the midst of these ominous but too well understood noises may be heard, over all, the shrill startling voice of the officer of the watch, generally betraying in its tone more or less uncertainty of purpose. Then we discover the violent flapping of the sails, and the mingled cries of "Clear away the boats!" "Is the life-buoy gone?" "Heave that grating after him!" "Throw that hen-coop over the stern!" "Who is it, do you know?" "Where did he fall from?" "Can he swim?" "Silence!" An impetuous, and too often an ill-regulated rush now succeeds to gain the boats, which are generally so crowded, that it becomes dangerous to lower them down, and more time is lost in getting the people out again than would have manned them twice over, if any regular system had been prepared, and rendered familiar and easy by practice beforehand.

I could give a pretty long list of cases which I

have myself seen, or have heard others relate, where men have been drowned while their shipmates were thus struggling on board who should be first to save them, and instead of aiding so laudable a cause, were actually impeding one another by their hurry-skurry and general ignorance of what really ought to be done. I remember, for example, hearing of a line-of-battle ship, in the Baltic, from which two men fell one evening, when the ship's company were at quarters. The weather was fine, the water smooth, and the ship going about seven knots. The two lads in question, who were furling the fore-royal at the time, lost their hold, and were jerked far in the sea. At least a dozen men, leaving their guns, leaped overboard from different parts of the ship, some dressed as they were, and others stripped. Of course, the ship was in a wretched state of discipline where such frantic proceedings could take place. The confusion soon became worse confounded; but the ship was hove aback, and several boats lowered down. Had it not been smooth water, daylight, and fine weather, many of these absurd volunteers must have perished. I call them absurd, because there is no sense in merely incurring a great hazard, without some useful purpose to guide the exercise of courage. Now, these intrepid fellows merely knew that a man had fallen overboard, and that was all; so away they leaped out of the ports and over the hammock-nettings, without knowing whereabouts the object of their Quixotic heroism might be. The boats were obliged to pick up the first that presented themselves, for they were all in a drowning condition; but the two unhappy men who had been flung from aloft, being furthest off, went to the bottom before their turn came. Whereas, had their undisciplined shipmates not officiously and most improperly gone into the water, the boats would have been at liberty to row towards the men who had fallen accidentally, both of whom, in that case, might to all appearance have been saved.

I remember a bitter kind of story which was current in the Navy when I first entered it, nearly thirty years ago. In those days, naval punishments were not only more severe than they now are, but they were inflicted with less solemnity than is at present deemed essential to their salutary effect. In a frigate, commanded by a well-known Tartar, as the martinets of the service are generally denominated, one of the crew, I forget from what cause, took it in his head to jump overboard, for the purpose of drowning himself. When he began to sink, he discovered that a salt-water death was not quite so agreeable as he had reckoned upon; so he sung out lustily for a rope. The ship being brought to the wind, the man was picked up, with some difficulty. The matter was investigated instantly; and as soon as it appeared that he had gone overboard intentionally, the hands were turned up, the gangway rigged, and the offender seized up. "Now," said the captain, "I shall punish you under the sixteenth article of war, which is as follows:—'Every person in or belonging to the fleet, who shall desert, shall suffer death, or such other punishment as the circumstances of the case shall deserve.'" And then, addressing the boatswain, he said, "You will punish this man for desertion, or, which is exactly the same thing, for going out of the ship without leave."

"Now, sir," resumed the captain to the trembling culprit, "if you have any longer a desire to go overboard, you have only to ask the first lieutenant's leave. He has my instructions to grant you permission; while I shall take very good care that you are not again picked up."

I shall not stop to consider whether this gangway levity is the very best preventive of nautical suicide; but I am quite sure that there can be no offence more deserving of punishment, as a matter of discipline, and in order to prevent its recurrence, than the practice of leaping overboard after a man who has fallen into the water. There are cases, no doubt, in which it would be a positive crime in a swimmer not to spring, without waiting for orders, to the rescue of a fellow-creature whom he sees sinking in the waves, at whatever hazard to himself or to others; but I speak of that senseless, blindfold style in which I have very often witnessed men pitch themselves into the water, without knowing where the person who had fallen overboard was likely to be found.

Even in highly-disciplined ships this will sometimes take place; and the badness of the weather, darkness of the night, or other circumstances which increase the danger, seem only to stimulate the boldest spirits to brave the risk. I conceive there is no method of putting a stop to the practice but by positively enjoining the people not to go overboard, unless expressly ordered; and by explaining to them on every occasion when the ship's company are exercised for this purpose, that the difficulty of picking a man up is generally much augmented by such indiscreet zeal.

I was lately told of some incidents which occurred in a frigate off Cape Horn, in a gale of wind, under close reefed main-topsail and storm-staysails. At half-past twelve at noon, when the people were at dinner, a young lad was washed out of the lee fore channels. The life-buoy was immediately let go, and the main-topsail laid to the mast. Before the jolly-boat could be lowered down, a man jumped overboard, as he said 'promiscuously,' for he never saw the boy at all, nor was ever within half a cable's length of the spot where he was floundering about. Although the youth could not swim, he confrived to keep his head above water till the boat reached him, just as he was beginning to sink. The man who had jumped into the sea was right glad to give up his 'promiscuous' search, and to make for the life-buoy, upon which he perched himself, and stood shivering for half-an hour, like a shag on the Mew-stone, till the boat came to his relief.

At four o'clock of the same day, a man fell from the rigging; the usual alarm and rush took place; the lee-quarter boat was so crowded, that one of the topping lifts gave way, the davit broke, and the cutter, now suspended by one tackle, soon knocked herself to pieces against the ship's side. Of course the people in her were jerked out very quickly, so that, instead of there being only one man in the water, there were nearly a dozen swimming about. More care was taken in hoisting out another boat, and, strange to say, all the people were picked up, except the original unfortunate man, who, but for the accident, which might and ought to have been prevented, would in all probability have been saved. Neither he nor the life-buoy, however, could be discovered before

the night closed; and it is most distressing to think, that perhaps he may have succeeded in reaching this support only to perish before the long winter night of those dreary regions could be one quarter over!

The life-buoy at present in use on board His Majesty's ships, and, I suppose, in all Indiamen, as well as, I trust, in most merchant ships, has an admirable contrivance connected with it, which has saved many lives, when otherwise there would hardly have been a chance of the men being rescued from a watery grave.

This life-buoy, which is the invention of Lieutenant Cook of the Navy, consists of two hollow copper vessels connected together, each about as large as an ordinary-sized pillow, and of buoyancy and capacity sufficient to support one man standing upon them. Should there be more than one person requiring support, they can lay hold of rope beckets fitted to the buoy, and so sustain themselves. Between the two copper vessels there stands up a hollow pole, or mast, into which is inserted, from below, an iron rod, whose lower extremity is loaded with lead, in such a manner, that when the buoy is let go, the iron rod slips down to a certain extent, lengthens the lever, and enables the lead at the end to act as ballast. By this means the mast is kept upright, and the buoy prevented from upsetting. The weight at the end of the rod is arranged so as to afford secure footing for two persons, should that number reach it; and there are also, as I said before, large rope beckets, through which others can thrust their head and shoulders, till assistance is rendered.

On the top of the mast is fixed a port-fire, calculated to burn, I think, twenty minutes, or half-an-hour; this is ignited most ingeniously by the same process which lets the buoy down into the water. So that a man falling overboard at night, is directed to the buoy by the blaze on the top of its pole or mast, and the boat sent to rescue him also knows in what direction to pull. Even supposing, however, the man not to have gained the life-buoy, it is clear that, if above the surface at all, he must be somewhere in that neighbourhood; and if he shall have gone down, it is still some satisfaction, by recovering the buoy, to ascertain that the poor wretch is not left to perish by inches.

The method by which this excellent invention is attached to the ship, and dropped into the water in a single instant, is perhaps not the least ingenious part of the contrivance. The buoy is generally fixed amidships over the stern, where it is held securely in its place by being strung, or threaded, as it were, on two strong perpendicular iron rods fixed to the taffrail, and inserted in holes piercing the framework of the buoy. The apparatus is kept in its place by what is called a slip-stopper, a sort of catch bolt or detent, which can be unlocked at pleasure, by merely pulling a trigger. Upon withdrawing the stopper, the whole machine slips along the rods, and falls at once into the ship's wake. The trigger which unlocks the slip-stopper is furnished with a lanyard, passing through a hole in the stern, and having at its inner end a large knob, marked "Life-Buoy;" this alone is used in the day-time. Close at hand is another wooden knob, marked "Lock," fastened to the end of a line fixed to the trigger of a gunlock primed with powder: and so arranged, that when the line is pulled, the port-fire is instantly ignited, while, at the same moment, the life-buoy descends, and floats merrily away, blazing like a lighthouse. It would surely be an improvement to have both these operations always performed simultaneously, that is, by one pull of the string. The port-fire would thus be lighted in every case of letting go the buoy; and I suspect the smoke in the daytime would often be as useful in guiding the boat, as the blaze always is at night.

The gunner who has charge of the life-buoy lock sees it freshly and carefully primed every evening at quarters, of which he makes a report to the captain. In the morning the priming is taken out, and the lock uncocked. During the night a man is always stationed at this part of the ship, and every half-hour, when the bell strikes, he calls out "Life-buoy!" to show that he is awake and at his post, exactly in the same manner as the look-out-men abaft, on the beam, and forward, call out "Starboard quarter!" "Starboard gangway!" "Starboard bow!" and so on, completely round the ship, to prove that they are not napping.

After all, however, it must be owned, that some of the most important considerations, when a man falls overboard, have as yet scarcely been mentioned. These are,

First, the quickest and most effectual method of arresting the ship's progress, and how to keep her as near the spot where the man fell as possible.

Secondly, to preserve entire, during these evolutions, the general discipline of the ship, to maintain silence, and to enforce the most prompt obedience, without permitting fool-hardy volunteering of any kind.

Thirdly, to see that the boat appointed to be employed on these occasions is secured in such a manner that she may be cast loose in a moment, and, when ready for lowering down, that she is properly manned, and fitted, so as to be efficient in all respects when she reaches the water.

Fourthly, to take care in lowering the boat neither to stave nor to swamp her, nor to pitch the men out.

And, lastly, to have a sufficient number of the sharpest-sighted men in the ship stationed aloft in such a manner as to give them the best chance, not only of discovering the person who is overboard, but of pointing him out to the people in the boat, who may not otherwise know in what direction to pull.

It is conceived that all these objects may be accomplished with very little, if any, additional trouble, in all tolerably well-disciplined ships.

Various opinions prevail amongst officers, as to the first point; but, I think, the best authorities recommend that, if possible, the ship should not merely be hove aback when a man falls overboard, but that she ought to be brought completely round on the other tack. Of course, sail should be shortened in stays, and the main yard left square. This plan implies the ship being on a wind, or from that position to having the wind not above two points abaft the beam. But, on one tack or the other, this will include a large portion of the sailing of every ship.

The great merit of such a method of proceeding is, that, if the evolution succeeds, the ship, when round, will drift right down towards the man. And although there may be some small risk in lowering the boat in stays, from the ship having at one period stern-way, there will, in fact, be little time lost if the boat be not lowered till the ship be well round, and the stern-way at an end. There is more mischief done, generally, by lowering the boat too soon, than by waiting till the fittest moment arrives for doing it coolly. And it cannot be too often repeated, that almost the whole depends upon the self-possession of the officer of the watch. This important quality is best taught (like everything else of the kind) by experience, that is to say, by a thorough and familiar practical knowledge of what is right to be done under all circumstances. It may be permitted for every other person in the ship to feel alarmed and shocked when the sounds reach his ears indicating that a man is overboard ; but the officer in command of the deck ought to let it be seen and felt, by his tone of voice, and by the judicious promptitude of his orders, that he, at least, is perfectly master of himself, and knows distinctly what course it is best to adopt.

If the ship be running before the wind, or be sailing large, and under a press of sail, the officer must exercise his judgment in rounding to, and take care in his anxi ty to save the *man, not* to let the masts go over the side, which will not advance, but defeat his object. If the top-gallant-sheets, the topsail, and top-gallant-haulyards, be let fly, and the head-yards braced quickly up, the ship when brought to the wind will be nearly in the situation of reefing topsails. Under these circumstances, it will hardly be possible to bring her about, for, long before she can have come head to wind, her way will be so much deadened that the rudder may have ceased to act. Still, however, I am so strong an advocate for the principle of tacking, instead of merely lying-to, when a man is overboard, that, even under the circumstances above described, as soon as the boat was lowered down and sent off, and the extra sail gathered in, I would fill, stand on till the ship had gained head-way enough to render the evolution certain, and then go about, so as to bring her head towards the boat. It must be recollected, that when a ship is going well off the wind in the manner here supposed, it is impossible to round her so quickly as to replace her on the spot where the man fell ; to reach which a great sweep must always be made. But there seems to me no doubt, that in every possible case, even when going right before it, the ship will always drift nearer and nearer to that spot, if eventually brought to the wind on the opposite tack from that on which she was luffed up.

It will conduce greatly to the success of these measures, if it be an established rule, that, whenever the alarm is given of a man being overboard, the people, without further orders, fly to their appointed stations for tacking ship ; and that only those persons who shall be specifically selected to man and lower down the boats, and for other duties, shall presume to quit the places assigned to them on going about. It so happens, that when the men are in their stations for tacking, they are almost equally in their stations for shortening sail, or for performing most other evolutions likely to become necessary at such moments.

The excepted men should consist of at least two boats' crews in each watch, and of others whose sole duty it should be to attend to the operation of lowering the boat or boats, into which no men but those expressly *appointed* should ever be allowed to enter. These persons, selected for their activity, strength, and coolness, should belong to the after-guard, main and mizen-top, and gunner's crew, men whose duties lie chiefly abaft or about the main-mast. Midshipmen in each watch should also be named to the different boats ; and their orders ought to be positive never to allow more than the proper crew to enter, nor on any account to permit the boat to be lowered till fully and properly manned. I grant that it requires no small nerve to sanction the delays which an attention to these minute particulars demands. But the adequate degree of faith in their utility will bring with it the requisite share of decision, to possess which, under all circumstances, is, perhaps, one of the most characteristic distinctions of a good commanding officer.

I could give anecdotes by the dozen of the mischief arising from these precautions not being attended to. I was lately told of a good case in point. A line-of-battle ship, during the war, was lying at anchor off Oléron in a hard gale of wind. A cutter had been sent to the senior officer on some service, but, not being able to pull to windward, she returned. All the men were called out except four, and the boat hoisted up. Through some inattention on the part of the boatswain's mate not piping belay in time, or from the tackle-fall being worn out (a frequent but most inexcusable neglect), one of the falls gave way, just as the boat reached the davit. The consequence was, all the four men were precipitated overboard. The stern-boat was instantly lowered down, with a midshipman and four hands in her ; but, owing to the want of some efficient system being previously established to meet such cases, three out of this precious boat's crew of volunteers could not pull a stroke ! Two of the men who had been pitched out of the cutter, accordingly, sunk before the boat could reach them, though she was not her own length from them. One man was pulled in, but the fourth could not be seen at all, and was supposed to have perished likewise. The men in the boat, not knowing how to use the oars, soon became terrified with their situation ; and had it not been for the able assistance of the rescued man, though he was half drowned, and the activity of the young midshipman, the boat must soon have been swamped, and all hands in her have gone to the bottom. As it was, they contrived, by great exertion, to keep her head to the sea, and in the ship's wake, till a rope, with a buoy to it, was veered to them. On being pulled under the stern, and just as they were hooking the tackles which were to hoist them up, they discovered the fourth man who had fallen overboard from the cutter clinging to the rudder-chains. The poor fellow was almost exhausted, by being soused over head and ears every time the ship pitched. He was secured by the boat-hook, and pulled in, more dead than alive.

It is not enough that care be taken to prevent

the boat being over-crowded, and that the crew which are to manage her know their business, or that an officer accustomed to command be in charge of her, and that she be deliberately lowered into the water by men who understand how to execute this rather difficult and delicate operation in bad weather; for there are still one or two apparently minor points which should not be neglected. The boat's plug, for example, ought in every case to be fastened to the bottom-board with a stout lanyard. I have seen the want of this very small article, which might prove the loss of the whole boat's crew, cause the greatest trouble and danger.

Much of the man's chance of being picked up will depend, in the day-time at least, upon the goodness of the look-out for him which is kept, by persons properly stationed in the rigging and elsewhere. At night, alas! the chances against the unhappy man are always greatly increased; and I shall never forget the melancholy which spreads instantaneously over the ship when the boat returns, and to the eager cry of, "Have you got the man?" it is answered, "We could see nothing of him; we heard him splashing in the water and calling out for a rope, but before we could reach the spot he had sunk. Here is the poor fellow's hat, which we picked up just where we had heard the sound of his voice." When Lieutenant Cook's life-buoy is used, indeed, the chances of saving the man at night are much greater; but still it is, at best, but a fearful chance even for an expert swimmer.

There ought, in every ship, to be selected a certain number of the sharpest-sighted persons, who should be instructed, the instant the alarm is given, to repair to stations appointed for them aloft. Several of these ought to plant themselves in the lower rigging, some in the topmast shrouds, and one, if not two, might advantageously be perched on each of the cross-trees. These persons, whose exclusive duty is to discover the man who is overboard, should be directed to look out, some in the ship's wake, some on either side of it, and to be particularly careful to mark the spot near which the ship must have been when he fell, in order that when she comes about, and drifts near the place, they may know where to direct their attention, and also to take care that the ship does not forge directly upon the object they are seeking for. The chief advantage of having look-out men stationed aloft in this manner consists in their commanding a far better position compared to that of persons on deck, and still better when compared to the people in the boat. Besides which, having this object alone to attend to, they are less likely to be unsuccessful. Moreover, from their being in considerable numbers, and scattered at different elevations, their chances are, of course, much increased of discovering so small an object as a man on the surface.

The people in the boat possess no such advantages, for they are occupied with their oars, and lose between the seas all sight of the surrounding objects near them, while they can always see the ship's masts; and as soon as they detect that any one of the look-out men sees the person who is overboard, and points in the proper direction for them to pull, they can shape their course accordingly. Presently another look-out, instructed by the first where to direct his eyes, also discovers the man; then another sees him, then another, and so on, till all who are aloft obtain sight of the desired object, and join in pointing with their hands to where it is to be found. The officer in the boat, thus instructed by innumerable pointers, rows at once, and with confidence, in the proper direction, and the drowning man is often rescued from his deep-sea grave, when, had there been no such look-outs, or had they been fewer in number or lower down, he must have perished.

I quite forget what officer it was who first told me of this plan, which, from frequent trial, I know to be most useful in practice. I shall certainly be most happy to publish the name of the inventor of this ingenious idea, if by any means I can recover it. The thing itself, I should imagine, requires only to be stated to insure its universal adoption. We wonder, indeed, how a measure of so much simplicity and obvious utility should not before have struck every one who has turned his attention to this subject—and what commanding-officer is there who has not? I shall be very glad to find myself mistaken in supposing that this plan is not as yet generally adopted; and I trust in no great length of time, it will form, in every ship, an integral part of an organised and well-understood system of regulations, exclusively directed to the important purpose of saving the lives of men who fall overboard.

It is quite obvious, indeed, the greater the number of eyes that can be employed in search of such a speck as a man's head presents, the better chance there will be of discovering it; and accordingly, as many men as possible should always be sent aloft to look out in the first instance; not fewer in any case than six or eight to each mast. As soon as the ship is fairly round, the sails trimmed, and the boat lowered down, at least the whole of one watch ought to be sent aloft, and scattered up and down the rigging, at the mast-heads, and on the yard-arms; for it is impossible to say from what spot the man can best be seen, or who shall be the fortunate individual to catch the first glimpse of him. I have even known a stupid, gummy-eyed fellow, who never before got credit for seeing much further than a mole, have the luck to discover a boy at a great distance, long before the others could distinguish anything floating on the water.

It is curious to observe the electric sort of style in which the perception of an object, when once pointed out, flashes along from man to man. As each in succession catches sight of his shipmate, he exclaims, "There he is! there he is!" and holds out his hand in the proper direction for the guidance of the boat. Indeed, I have seldom witnessed a more interesting sight than that of eighty or a hundred persons, stationed aloft, straining their eyes to keep sight of a poor fellow who is struggling for his life, and all eagerly extending their hands towards him, as if they could clutch him from the waves. To see these hands drop again is inexpressibly painful, from its indicating that the unfortunate man is no longer distinguishable. One by one the arms fall down, reluctantly, as if it were a signal that all hope was over. Presently the boat is observed to range about at random; the look-out men aloft, when repeatedly hailed and asked, "if they see anything

like him?" are all silent. Finally, the boat's recall-flag is hoisted, sail is again made on the ship, the people are piped down, and this tragical little episode in the voyage being concluded, everything goes on as before.

CHAPTER XI.

SUNDAY ON BOARD A MAN-OF-WAR.—MUSTERING BY DIVISIONS.

THE first article of war runs as follows:—"All commanders, captains, and officers, in or belonging to any of His Majesty's ships or vessels of war, shall cause the public worship of Almighty God, according to the liturgy of the Church of England established by law, to be solemnly, orderly, and reverently performed in their respective ships; and shall take care that prayers and preaching, by the chaplains in holy orders of the respective ships, be performed diligently; and that the Lord's day be observed according to law."

The precision with which these injunctions are attended to will depend chiefly on three things:—The personal disposition of the captain; the nature of the service upon which the ship is employed; and the state of the weather. 'When there is a will there is a way,' according to the old saying; so that the question depends ultimately, in most cases, very much on the commander himself. It is always in his power, or nearly always, to make the Sunday a day of rest to the people committed to his charge, or to render it one of extra trouble and irritation to them. Sooner or later, he is sure to reap the fruits of his decision in this matter, and is inevitably made to feel, that if he wishes either to command the respect or to win the regard of his crew, so that their united and strenuous exertions may be reckoned upon at moments of need, he must take care to show them, on all ordinary occasions, not only that he is himself under the guidance of right principles, but likewise that he is sincerely concerned in extending their influence over others. In the same spirit, his authority will be strengthened by every touch of consideration with which the inevitable sternness of his rule can be softened; and the more he manages to impart to all such indulgences the character of routine, or matters of course and constant usage, so much the better. We feel obliged to a person who confers almost any favour upon us; but if this favour be one of daily or weekly occurrence, and, at each time of its concession, we are reminded of the weight of our obligation, all kindliness is in danger of being removed from it, and we would sometimes rather go without, than hold the advantage by a tenure thus avowedly capricious.

A captain of sense and feeling, therefore, avoids all show, or palaver, as it is called, when granting such relaxations. He makes it his business, in the first place, to find out what is right and proper, consistently with the rules of the service generally, and then to ascertain how far the peculiar nature of the employment upon which the ship is engaged will admit of a further extension of indulgences, or requires their abridgment. Having settled with himself what is possible to be done with propriety, he should grant it neither as a matter of personal favour, nor as a matter of right on the part of the people, but simply because it is fitting in itself. It may, perhaps, afterwards suit his views to withdraw, or to intermit these indulgences, either because they prove hurtful to the service, or because he may find it necessary to let his power of punishing be felt in this negative way, when his intentions have been misapprehended and his indulgence turned to bad purpose; but in every case it seems advisable, as I have said, to allow all such things to fall as much as possible into a consistent routine. There can be little doubt that the pain of executing laborious and disagreeable duties is often materially lessened by their strictly periodical recurrence; for in time their nature and duration come to be so correctly measured and allowed for, that the joys of the leisure moments which intervene are always greatly enhanced. By a similar and very beautiful, I had almost said ingenious arrangement of our nature, it happens that the innocent pleasures of life, so far from palling by regularity, are actually much increased by it. I have frequently remarked with surprise the intense interest with which the sailors, like children, returned day after day exactly to the same amusement. On the other hand, I have seldom failed to observe how exceedingly they were put out of their way by losing indulgences, apparently of the most trivial kind, but to which they had become habituated.

People often fancy that, because the life of a seaman is one of constant change of place and occupation, he cannot fall into any regularity of habits; but on board a man-of-war it is really quite the reverse. He becomes there so much the creature of habit, that, by a little management, he may be moulded to almost any purpose. There is no man more docile than Jack, I might say no child; but then the hand that guides him must be tempered by discretion, by kindness, and, above all, by uniformity, or, as it is called afloat, by system. There may be bad systems as well as good ones; but I am half inclined to say, that even the worst system, if strictly adhered to, is better than the wretched uncertainty of purpose which clings to ill-regulated and vacillating discipline, though every single act may be dictated by good-will and the sincerest wish to do right.

These observations, which apply generally to the whole course of naval affairs, will, I think, be found to bear with such peculiar force on the arrangements of our Sunday, that if any one wished to learn, from a single day's observation, what was the probable state of discipline on board a particular ship, I should say, let the inquirer ascertain how the first day of the week is got through, and he may guess pretty correctly as to all the rest.

It is not possible, at sea, to comply to the letter with the fourth commandment; but we have no right on that account to dispense with its spirit, which is at all times, and in all places, within every man's reach. The absolute necessity, however, of performing some work, appears a sufficient reason with many people for doing away with the ordinance of Sunday altogether, and converting it into a day of hard and irksome toil, instead of a season of at least comparative rest. On the other hand, some officers, from a mistaken sense of duty, or from an exaggerated enthusiasm, either allow

essential public interests to be neglected which ought to be attended to, or they harass their people by exacting more attention, or, I should rather say, devoting more time to religious observances, than the poor sailors can bestow with any chance of profit. Which of these courses is the worst, I really cannot say. If Sunday be made a working day, and no attention whatever is paid to its appropriate duties, the crew are by no means satisfied, and but too readily contract, by degrees, the habit of neglecting their obligations both to God and man. On the contrary, if the day be entirely taken up with devotional exercises, to the fatigue of their minds and bodies, they are exceedingly apt, after a time, to vote the 'whole concern,' as they call it, a bore, and to make up for this forced attention by the most scandalous indecencies, when out of sight of their 'psalm-singing captain.'

It will not always answer, merely because a thing is proper in itself, to follow rigorously the most straightforward course, regardless of what is said or thought to the right and left. If we sincerely desire to do good, we must not only condescend to work with such tools as we have in our hands, but resolve to employ them in a manner suited to the materials we wish to fashion to a certain purpose. Of this, at all events, we may rest assured, that unless we contrive, by some means or other, to gain the sympathy of the people on board our ship, and to carry them along with us, we may preach to them till doomsday, without in the smallest degree influencing their habits, or turning their minds towards the channels we so anxiously desire them to fall into.

In what particular way the sailors are to be won to think and feel as we wish them to do, must depend, in every individual case, on its peculiar circumstances; and its management will be modified by the good-will and sagacity of the commander.

Great care must be taken to overdo nothing, and, as far as may be, to allow all such matters to grow into habits. For, in this way the minds of men are most certainly brought into proper train at the fittest moments for considering any subject we wish to impress upon them. And although it may be said that too great an attention to an exact order has the effect of substituting mere external observances for the true sentiments of which these ought only to serve as the index, yet we seldom see an instance in which a judicious pastor, whether dressed in a surplice or rigged in a uniform, may not avail himself of his authority (human or divine) to much greater purpose, by the assistance of established formalities.

I would accordingly recommend every officer in command of a ship to bring as many of the arrangements of his Sunday as possible into a jog-trot order, not to be departed from unless there should arise an absolute necessity for such deviation. Nineteen Sundays might, indeed, pass over without any express or apparent advantage being gained from this uniformity, but on the twentieth some opportunity might occur, of infinite value to all concerned, which opportunity might, in all probability, prove unavailing but for the previous preparation. To borrow a professional illustration of the most familiar kind; it may be asked, how many hundred times do we exercise the great guns and small arms, for once that we fire them in real action? And why should it be supposed that, for the useful application of our mental energies to the most important of all warfare, habitual training is less necessary?

There is, of course, nothing new in all this; but I am not aware that these maxims have been sufficiently attended to as an express point of naval discipline, which certainly is to be regretted; for sailors, with all their faults, are very willing, poor fellows! if duly managed, to submit to legitimate persuasion. The opportunities for engaging their attention to good account are numberless; and their predisposition is, upon the whole, so favourable, that I am convinced, if adequate means of instruction were always at hand and in every ship, the condition of our seamen in these respects might be changed very much for the better, not only for themselves, but for the country they serve.

I must beg, therefore, to repeat once more, that I live in great hopes of some day seeing a regular chaplain on board every one of His Majesty's ships. I do not mean a person who shall come amongst us for a time, and who shall merely make the service a stepping-stone to church preferment on shore. What I hope to see is, a set of clergymen educated with a view to the clerical duties of a ship's ministry, and who shall be ordained expressly and exclusively for the Navy, without the prospect of quitting it for other preferment. That there are formidable practical difficulties in the way of this scheme, I am well aware; but surely all these might be overcome, as they have been already conquered in the analogous instance of the Colonies. Of course (as I have before endeavoured to explain at length), it would be requisite greatly to improve the present situation of chaplains, in order to induce men of talents, and educated at the universities, to devote their lives to duties involving so many privations. The retiring salary, in particular, ought to be made considerable, as well as the emoluments for long service; and if, as I have also endeavoured to explain, to the duty of clergyman that of schoolmaster were united, the benefits conferred on the naval profession could hardly fail to be very great. The character of the man-of-war seaman might thus be gradually improved, under the constant operation of such an addition to the ordinary discipline of the fleet. The change would, I dare say, be very slow, and for a long time almost imperceptible; but I imagine it would be all the better on that account, and, in due season, a general amelioration in the habits of all the other sailors of the country might follow these improvements in the Navy.

Without going needlessly deep into these speculations, we may observe, in the mean time, that, even in the least regularly disciplined ships, there is now a marked difference between Sunday and any other day in the week. Although the grand object seems to be to have everything as clean as possible, and in its most apple-pie order, great part of the labour employed to produce this result is over before Sunday arrives. The decks, for instance, receive such a thorough allowance of holy-stoning and scrubbing on Saturday, that a mere washing, with perhaps a slight touch of the brushes and sand, brings them into the milk-white condition which is the delight of every genuine

first lieutenant's heart. All this is got over early in the morning, in order that the decks may be swabbed up and the ropes nicely flemished down before seven bells, at which time it is generally thought expedient to go to breakfast, though half an hour sooner than usual, in order to make the forenoon as long as possible. I should have mentioned that the hammocks are always piped up at seven o'clock. If they have been slung overnight, they are as white as any laundress could have made them ; and, of course, the hammock-stowers take more than ordinary care to place them neatly in the nettings, with their bright numbers turned inwards, all nicely lashed up with the regulated proportion of turns, each hammock being of a uniform size from end to end.

While the people are at breakfast, the word is passed to 'clean for muster,' in any dress the commanding officer may think most suitable to the climate or weather. Between the tropics, the order for rigging in frocks and trousers is generally delivered in these words :

"Do you hear, there ! fore and aft ! Clean for muster at five bells—duck frocks and white trousers !"

In colder regions, it is "Blue jackets and trousers ;" and in rainy, cold, or blowing weather, the following order is sung out along the lower deck, first by the husky-throated boatswain, and then in a still rougher enunciation by his gruff satellites, the boatswain's mates :

"D'ye hear there ! Clean shirt and a shave for muster at five bells !"

Twice a week, on Thursdays and Sundays, the operation of shaving is held to be necessary. These are called 'clean-shirt days.' Mondays and Fridays are the days appointed for washing the clothes.

It is usual to give the men three quarters, instead of half an hour to breakfast on Sundays, that they may have time to rig themselves in proper trim before coming on deck. The watch, therefore, is called at a quarter-past eight, or it may be one bell, which is half-past. The forenoon watch bring their clothes-bags up with them, in order that they may not be again required to leave the deck before muster. The bags are piled in neat pyramids, or in other forms, sometimes on the booms before the boats, and sometimes in a square mass on the after-part of the quarter-deck of a frigate. It strikes my recollection, that in most ships there is a sort of difficulty in finding a good place on which to stow the bags.

As soon as the forenoon watch is called, the between-decks, on which the men live, is carefully cleaned, generally by what is called dry holy-stoning. This is done by rubbing the deck with small smooth pieces of freestone, after a layer of well-dried sand has been sprinkled over it. This operation throws up a good deal of dust ; but it makes the deck white, which is the grand point aimed at. The wings, the store-rooms, and the cockpits, undergo a similar dose of rubbing and scrubbing ; in short, every hole and corner of the decks, both above and below stairs, as folks on shore would say, is swept, and swept, and swept again, on a Sunday morning, till the panting sweepers are half dead ; indeed, the rest of the ship's company are worried out of all patience, from eight o'clock to half-past ten, with the eternal cry of 'Pipe the sweepers !' followed by a sharp, interrupted whistle, not unlike the note of a pet canary.

What with cleaning the decks and cleaning themselves, the watch below have fully enough to do to get all ready by five bells. It must be remembered, too, that they have had the morning watch to keep, since four o'clock, and the whole trouble of washing the upper decks, shaking out the reefs, stowing the hammocks, and coiling down the ropes ; all easy matters of routine, it is true, but still sufficiently tiresome when multiplied so often.

At the appointed hour of half-past ten, to a single stroke of the bell, the mate of the watch, directed by the officer on deck, who again acts in obedience to the captain's orders, conveyed to him by the first lieutenant, calls out,

"Beat to divisions !"

It should have been stated, that before this period arrives, the mate of the decks and the mate of the hold, the boatswain, gunner, and carpenter, have all severally received reports from their subordinates that their different departments are in proper order for inspection. Reports to the same effect being then finally made to the first lieutenant by the mates and warrant-officers, he himself goes round the ship to see that all is right and tight, preparatory to the grand inspection. I ought also to have mentioned, that the bags of the watch below are piped up at ten o'clock, so that nothing remains between decks but the mess-tables, stools, and the soup and grog kids. Long before this hour, the greater number of the whole ship's company have dressed themselves and are ready for muster ; but the never-ending sweepers, the fussy warrant-officers' yeomen, the exact purser's steward, the slovenly midshipmen's boy, the learned loblolly boy, and the interminable host of officers' servants, who have always fifty extra things to do, are often so sorely pressed for time, that at the first tap of the drum beating to divisions, these idlers, as they are technically much miscalled, may often be seen only then lugging their shirts over their heads, or hitching up their trousers in all the hurry-scurry of a lower-deck toilet. I should have recorded, that in the ship's head, as well as on the fore-part of the main-deck, and likewise between the guns, chiefly those abreast of the fore-hatchway, there have been groups assembled to scrape and polish themselves ever since breakfast-time, and even before it. Some are washing themselves ; others cutting, and combing, and trimming their hair ; for, now-a-days, there are none of those huge long tails, or club ties, which descended along the back of the sailors who fought with Benbow and Rodney. The dandyism of Jack has now taken another turn, and the knowing thing at present is to have a parcel of ringlets hanging from the temples almost to the collar-bone. Some of the youngest and best-looking of the foretop-men would also very fain indulge in the feminine foppery of ear-rings. In the merchant service, many sailors 'disgrace their persons,' as we allege, in this style, and in all foreign services the odious practice exists ; but in the British Navy it is absolutely forbidden.

I remember once, on the beach of Madras, witnessing an amusing scene between Sir Samuel Hood, then commander-in-chief in India, and the

newly-promoted boatswain of a sloop-of-war belonging to the squadron. The Admiral, who was one of the bravest, and kindest, and truest-hearted seamen that ever trod a ship's decks, was a sworn foe to all trickery in dress-work. The eye of the veteran officer was directed earnestly towards the yeast of waves, which in immense double rows of surf fringe and guard the whole of that flat coast. He was watching the progress of a Massullah boat, alternately lost in the foam, and raised in very uncertain balance across the swell, which, though just on the break, brought her swiftly towards the shore. He felt more anxious than usual about the fate of this particular boat, from having ordered on shore the person alluded to, with whom he wished to have some conversation previous to their parting company. This boatswain was a young man, who had been for some years a follower of the Admiral in different ships, and to whom he had just given a warrant. The poor fellow, unexpectedly promoted from before the mast to the rank of an officer, was trigged up in his newly-bought, but marvellously ill-cut uniform, shining like a dollar, and making its wearer, who for the first time in his life had put on a long coat, feel not a little awkward.

As soon as the boat was partly driven up the beach by the surf, and partly dragged beyond the dash of the breakers by the crowd on shore, this happiest of warrant-officers leaped out on the sand, and seeing the Admiral above him, standing on the crest of the natural glacis which lines the shore, he took off his hat, smoothed down the hair on his forehead, sailor fashion, and stood uncovered, in spite of the roasting sun flaming in the zenith.

The Admiral, of course, made a motion with his hand for the boatswain to put his hat on; but the other, not perceiving the signal, stood stock-still.

"I say, put on your hat!" called the commander-in-chief, in a tone which made the newly-created warrant start. In his agitation he shook a bunch of well-trimmed ringlets a little on one side, and betrayed to the flashing eyes of the Admiral a pair of small round silver ear-rings, the parting gift, doubtless, of some favoured and favouring 'Poll or Bess' of dear, old, blackguard Point Beach, the very ninth heaven of all light-hearted sailors. Be this as it may, the Admiral, first stepping on one side, and then holding his head forward, as if to re-establish the doubting evidence of his horrified senses, and forcibly keeping down the astonished seaman's hat with his hand, roared out,

"Who the devil are you?"

"John Marline, sir!" replied the bewildered boatswain, beginning to suspect the scrape he had got himself into.

"Oh!" cried the flag-officer, with a scornful laugh. "Oh! I beg your pardon; I took you for a Portuguese."

"No, sir!" instinctively faltered out the other, seeing the Admiral expected some reply.

"No! Then, if you are not a foreigner, why do you hoist false colours? What business has an English sailor with these d—d machines in his ears?"

"I don't know, sir," said poor Marline. "I put them in only this morning, when I rigged myself in my new togs to answer the signal on shore."

"Then," said Sir Samuel, softened by the contrite look of his old shipmate, and having got rid of the greater portion of his bile by the first explosion, "you will now proceed to unrig yourself of this top hamper as fast as you can; pitch them into the surf, if you like; but never, as you respect the warrant in your pocket, let me see you in that disguise again."

When the drum beats the well-known 'Générale,' the ship's company range themselves in a single line along both sides of the quarter-deck, the gangways, and all round the forecastle. In a frigate, the whole crew may be thus spread out on the upper deck alone; but in line-of-battle ships the numbers are so great, that similar ranges, each consisting of a division, are likewise formed on the opposite sides of the main-deck. The marines, under arms, and in full uniform, fall in at the after-part of the quarter-deck; while the ship's boys, under the master-at-arms, with his ratan in hand, muster on the forecastle.

In some ships the men are sized, as it is called, the tallest being placed at the after-end, and so on down to the most diminutive, who is fixed at the extremity. But this arrangement, being more of a military than of a naval cast, is rarely adopted now-a-days. It will seldom happen, indeed, that the biggest and burliest fellows in a ship's company are the leading men. They may chance, indeed, to be poulterers, cook's mates, or fit only to make sweepers of; personages who after a three years' station barely know the stem from the stern, and could no more steer the ship than they could take a lunar distance. Nothing, therefore, can be more ridiculous than judging of the men by their stature, or putting such lubberly persons as these just alluded to over the heads of thorough-bred able seamen, captains of the tops or forecastle, hardy sailors, whose abilities, knowledge, or trustworthy vigilance, and long-tried experience, in spite of diminutive stature, may very deservedly have placed them in the foremost stations amongst the crew. Officers, however, on first joining a ship, are very apt to be guilty of some injustice towards the people by judging of them too hastily from appearance alone. We are insensibly so much prepossessed in favour of a fine, tall, good-looking sailor-lad, and prejudiced against a grizzled, crooked, little wretch, that if both happen to be brought before us for the same offence, we almost instinctively commit the injustice of condemning the ugly fellow, and acquitting the smart-looking one, before a tithe of the evidence has reached our ears.

This recalls to my recollection how multitudinous are the sore entanglements in which a captain's judgment may, on these occasions, be caught, and his authority be warped to the side of injustice, when he fancies all the while he is truly executing his duty. I have sometimes suspected, on looking back, that I once decided a disputed case rather unfairly, in which one of the parties spoke the broadest Scotch patois of my native town. I may have been influenced by the unworthy dread of being thought partial to my countrymen, and therefore gave the case more against poor Saunders than he deserved. But let no person who has never been actually placed in the

trying situation of a judge, pretend to estimate the difficulties of that most responsible and fearful of all offices. "What will people say?" is pretty nearly always a very shabby question, but one which too many public men ask themselves when hesitating as to how they shall act, forgetting that the only questions ought to be, "What is really and truly right? what will men of experience and virtue think? or, what shall I have eventually to say to my own conscience on the subject?"

Leaving these speculative questions, however, for the present, let us return to the divisions, which are arranged along the deck, not, as formerly, by sizes, but, in the proper way, by the watch-bill. The forecastle-men, of course, come first, as they stand so in the lists by which they are mustered at night by the mate of the watch; then the fore-top men, and so on to the gunners, after-guard, and waisters. Each division is under charge of a lieutenant, who, as well as the midshipmen of his division, appears in full uniform. The people are first mustered by the young gentlemen, and then carefully inspected by the officer of the division, who sees that every man is dressed according to order, and that he is otherwise in proper trim. It is also usual in hot climates for the surgeon and his assistants to pass along the lines, to ascertain, partly by the men's looks, and partly by an examination of their limbs, that no traces of scurvy have begun to show themselves. I have often seen illnesses which, had they not been thus taken hold of in the very commencement, and cured at once, might have confined men for weeks or months to their hammocks, or conducted their bodies in no great space of time over the standing part of the fore-sheet.

While the mustering and inspecting of the divisions is going on, the captain paces the quarter-deck, in company with the first lieutenant. No other voices are heard except theirs, and that of the midshipmen calling over the names of the men, or the officers putting some interrogatory about a spot of tar on a pair of duck trousers, or an ill-mended hole in the sleeve of a shirt. In a few minutes even these sounds are hushed, and nothing is distinguishable fore and aft but the tread of the respective officers, on their way aft to report to the captain on the quarter-deck that all are present, properly dressed, and clean, at their different divisions. The marine officer likewise makes a report of his party and their equipments. The first lieutenant now turns to the captain, takes off his hat, and says,

"All the officers have reported, sir."

To which the other replies,

"We'll go round the ship, then, if you please;" and off they trudge, after leaving the deck in charge of the second lieutenant, or the master, as may be determined upon at the moment.

A pin might now be heard, if let fall any where on board; and but for the sound of the wind amongst the cordage, or the stroke of a slack rope against the mast, or the occasional shake in the weather-leach of a lofty sail braced rather too fine; and except for the rippling sound of the water about the bows, and the creaking caused by her heeling over under the pressure of the wind, the ship might be supposed to be unmanned, and lying dismantled in the basin of Portsmouth dock-yard.

As the captain approaches the first division, he is received by the officer commanding it, who touches his hat, and then falls into the train behind. Of course, the moment the skipper appears, the men along the whole line take off their hats, smooth down their locks, make many clumsy efforts to stand erect, fumble interminably with the waistband of their trousers, and shuffle, to more or less purpose, according to the motion of the ship, to maintain their toes exactly at the line or seam in the deck along which they have been cautioned twenty times they are to stand. The captain, as he moves slowly past, eyes each man from head to foot, and lets nothing pass of which he disapproves. The officer of the division is ready to explain, or to take a note of what alteration is required; but supposing all to be right, not a syllable is spoken, and at the end of the division the captain again touches his hat to the officer, who returns the salute, and remains with his people.

He then proceeds to the forecastle, at the break of which he is received by the three warrant-officers, the boatswain, gunner, and carpenter, in their best coats, cut after the fashion of the year one, broad-tailed, musty, and full of creases from bad packing and little use, and blazing from top to bottom with a double-tiered battery of buttons of huge dimensions. Behind these worthy personages, who seldom look much at home in their finery, stands the master-at-arms, in front of his troop of young scamps; not the young gentlemen, but the troublesome small fry, known by the name of the ship's boys, destined in good time to be sailors, and perhaps amongst the best and truest that we ever number in our crews. For as these lads are bred up exclusively amongst men-of-war's men, they gradually acquire, naturally and easily, all the habits, as well as the sentiments, of His Majesty's service; besides which, they have nothing to unlearn, as merchant seamen invariably have to do, when, either by impressment or by volunteering, they are brought amongst naval persons.

I may also remark, that it is a great mistake to suppose able seamen cannot be as thoroughly bred on board a man-of-war as in any collier, which is proverbially the best school. We have, to be sure, in the Navy, a far greater number of hands on board, in proportion to the quantity of work to be done; and as there are generally amongst them plenty of men well qualified to execute the duties required by seamen, those who are not yet thoroughly taught are seldom as directly called upon to learn a seaman's trade as they would be were they in a short-handed merchant-ship. But this state of things furnishes no excuse, I conceive, for those officers who fail to consider it part of their business to see that every man and boy in their ships be trained as fast as possible in all points of a sailor's calling. The opportunities are always at hand, the instructors numerous and competent; and it may readily be made not only the duty but the interest and pleasure of the older seamen to teach what they themselves know to those who are less informed. In the process of this useful schooling, it will almost invariably come out, that many of those hands who hailed for able seamen merely upon their own showing, had obtained higher ratings on the ship's books than they were entitled to. One person is perhaps a good

helmsman, but is ignorant of the marks on the lead-line; while another may be expert as a leadsman, and yet be anything but trustworthy at the weather-wheel. Or a sailor may steer a ship admirably, and call the soundings correctly from the chains in the darkest night, who might cut but a sorry figure at the weather-earing in a snow-storm. In short, it is a most important, and almost an imperative duty, on the officers of every man-of-war, to ascertain, by actual investigation, how far their people are entitled to the ratings they claim. If we do not see to this, we are perpetually misapplying the resources of the nation, by mistaking their true quality.

It soon becomes apparent amongst the crew of a man-of-war, as it does in every other situation in the world, that one of the most speedy and certain methods of instructing a person in any art, is to impose on him the duty of a teacher of others. In this useful way the whole of a man-of-war's ship's company may be taught as much of the art of seamanship as they could possibly have learned in the same time in a collier, or in any other ship that swims.

I should have mentioned, that before leaving the upper deck the captain proceeds to inspect the marines, who are drawn up across or along the quarter-deck abaft. Most captains think it both judicious and kind to visit the marines first, before going round the sailors' divisions; and I have never seen this practice adopted without manifest advantage. The marines are excellent fellows, well-trained, hardy, cheerful, duly respecting themselves, and proud of their service: while, from belonging to a fixed corps, and from not being liable (like the seamen) to be perpetually disbanded and scattered, they acquire a permanent interest, or an inherent esprit de corps, as well as a permanent footing in the Navy. In like manner, the marine officers constitute one of the most gentlemanlike bodies of men in the King's service. They are thoroughly imbued with all the high sentiments of honour belonging to the military character; and they possess, moreover, in a very pleasant degree, the fredom of manner and versatility of habits peculiar to those who go down to the sea in ships, but which cannot be taught by any other method than practice, and pretty long and tough practice too.

The utility of this important body of men on board a man-of-war is so great, that it becomes the duty of every lover of the profession to support all its ranks and classes, by every means in his power, and especially to render their situation when afloat one of respectability, happiness, and contentment. In speaking of the utility of the jolly marines, as they are kindly enough called by the sailors, who, in spite of all their quizzing, really esteem their pipe-clayed shipmates, I refer less to their services in action, either on board, or in the event of co-operation with the military on terra firma, than to their inestimable value in sustaining the internal discipline of the service. The manner in which this is brought about forms one of the most interesting peculiarities in the whole range of naval affairs; but it deserves to be treated of separately, and at length.

The two divisions ranged along the main deck, supposing the ship's company so distributed, next engage the captain's attention. I think it is usual to take that first which stands on the starboard side of the deck, with the after-end, or its left, as military men would say, close against the bulkhead of the captain's cabin, while the foremost men of the division extend under the forecastle. On arriving at the galley or kitchen, the captain is received by the cook (or as much as may be left of him, according to the Greenwich Hospital joke), behind whom stands his mate, generally a tall, glossy, powerful negro, who, unlike his chief, has always a full allowance of limbs, with a round and shining face, about as moist as one of the tubful of huge suet puddings, tied up in bags alongside of him. The cook, aided by 'Quamino,' lifts the lids off the coppers, that the captain may peer into them, and ascertain whether or not all is clean and nice. With the end of his wooden leg the cook then gives a twist to the cock of the coppers, to let some of the pease-soup in preparation run off and show itself to the noble commander's inspection. The oven-doors are next opened, the range or large fire stirred up, and every hole and corner exposed to view; the object of the grand visitation being to see that this essential department of the ship is in the most perfect state of cleanliness and good order.

Still further forward, before the galley, in the very nose of her, as the foremost nook or angle of the ship is called, and a little on one side, lies the sick bay or hospital; at the door of which the surgeon, backed by his assistants, receives the captain and his double the first lieutenant, and his double the mate of the main-deck. In they march, all in a row. The captain takes care not to pass any invalid's hammock without dropping a word of encouragement to its pale inmate, or begging to be informed if any thing further can be done to make him comfortable. Only those men who are very unwell, however, are found in their beds; the rest being generally seated on the chests and boxes placed round the bay, a part of the ship which, I need scarcely mention, is kept, if possible, more clean, airy, and tidy than any other. If a speck of dirt be found on the deck, or a gallipot or phial out of its place, woe betide the loblolly boy, the assistant-surgeon's assistant, and the constant attendant upon the hospital. This personage is usually a fellow of some small knowledge of reading and writing, who, by overhearing the daily clinical lectures of the doctor, contrives to pick up a smattering of medical terms, which he loses no opportunity of palming off upon his messmates below as sublime wisdom sucked in at Alma Mater.

Just before leaving the sick-bay, the captain generally turns to the surgeon, and says, as a matter of course, "Doctor, mind you always send aft at dinner-time for anything and everything you require for the sick;" and I have frequently remarked that his whole tone and manner are greatly softened during this part of the rounds, perhaps without his being conscious of any difference. A very small share of attention on the part of a commanding-officer on such occasions, if kindly and unaffectedly exercised, leaves a wonderfully favourable impression, not only among the invalids to whom it is more particularly addressed, but seldom fails to extend its salutary influence over the rest of the ship's company, and thus, of course, contributes materially to strengthen and

to maintain his authority. Such expressions of sympathy never fail to act like drops of oil on the machinery of discipline, making all its wheels work smoothly and sweetly.

The lower deck is next examined. The bags have been carried on deck, so that, as I mentioned before, nothing remains but the people's mess-tables and mess things, their kids, and crockery. As Jack is mighty fond of a bit of show in his way, many of the berths or mess-places exhibit goodly ranges of tea-cups and regiments of plates worthy of the celebrated Blue Posts Tavern, occasionally flanked by a huge tea-pot, famously emblazoned with yellow dragons and imitation Chinese. The intervals between the shelves are generally ornamented with a set of pictures of rural innocence, where shepherds are seen wooing shepherdesses, balanced by representations of not quite such innocent Didos weeping at the Sally Port, and waving their lily hands to departing sailor-boys. On the topmost-shelf stands, or is tied to the side, a triangular piece of a mirror, three inches perhaps by three, extremely useful in adjusting the curls of our nautical coxcombs, of whom one at least is to be found in every berth.

The mess-tables, which are kept so bright you would suppose them whitewashed, are hooked to the ship's side at one end, while the other is suspended by small ropes covered with white canvas. Against these lines rest the soup and grog kids, shining in a double row along the deck, which is lighted up, fore and aft, for the captain's visit, by a candle in each berth. In frigates it is usual, I believe, to let the people have a certain number of chests, besides their bags. These not only form convenient seats for the men at meals, and couches on which to stretch their worn-out limbs during the watch below, but they afford a place in which the sailors may stow away some part of their best attire, deposit their little knick-knacks, and here and there a book, or mayhap a love-letter, or some cherished love-token. A chest, in short, or the share of a chest, even though it be only a quarter, or a sixth part, is always so great a comfort that this indulgence ought to be granted when it can possibly be allowed. In single-decked ships, I conceive it may generally be permitted: in a line-of-battle ship hardly ever. In a frigate, as there are no guns on the lower-deck, where the people mess and sleep, there is nothing to clear away on coming into action; but in a ship of the line the men pass their whole lives amongst the guns, by night as well as by day, and as it is absolutely necessary to keep every part ready for action at an instant's warning, nothing can be allowed to remain between the guns but such articles as may be carried out of the way in a moment. It is sometimes nonsensical, and even cruel, to carry this system into a frigate, where the same necessity for keeping the space unencumbered does not exist. Doubtless the mate of the lower deck, and often enough the first lieutenant, and sometimes even the captain, will be anxious to break up all the men's chests, in order to have a clear-looking, open, airy, between-decks, to make a show of But with proper care it may be kept almost as clear and quite as clean with a couple of chests in each berth as without. Even were it otherwise, we ought, I think, rather to give up a little appearance to secure so great a share of comfort to those who, at best, are not overburdened with luxuries.

As the captain walks aft, along the lower deck, he comes to the midshipmen's berth, or room, in which the youngsters mess. It is the foremost and largest of a range of cabins built up on each side, and reaching as far aft as the gun-room, or mess-place of the commissioned officers. It is only in line-of-battle ships that the mids mess in the cockpit; while in frigates they not merely mess but sleep in the part of the lower deck called, I know not why, the steerage. I ought to have mentioned, that before the cabins of the officers, and abaft those of the sailors, lie the berths of the marines; but, of course, these mess-places of the men are not partitioned off, being merely denoted by the tables and shelves. The boatswain, gunner, and carpenter, have their cabins in the steerage.

The captain peeps into each of these dens as he moves along. In that of the midshipmen he may probably find a youth with the quarantine-flag up; that is, in the sick-list. His cue, we may suppose, is always to look as miserable and woe-begone as possible. If he have had a tussle with a mess-mate, and one or both his eyes are bunged up in consequence, it costs him no small trouble to conceal his disorderly misdeeds. It would be just as easy, in fact, to stop the winds as to stop the use of fisty-cuffs amongst a parcel of hot-blooded lads between thirteen and nineteen, although, of course, such rencontres are held to be contrary to the laws and customs used at sea, and are punishable accordingly. The captain, pretending ignorance, however, merely grins; and, without exposing the boy to the necessity of getting up a story, remarks:

"I suppose, Master Peppercorn, you fell down the after-hatchway ladder, and struck your eye against the corner of a chest? Didn't you? And, what is odd enough, I dare say, when I cross to the starboard berth, I shall find Mr. Mustardseed, who has met with exactly the same accident about the same time. What do you think? Eh?"

"I don't know, sir," answers the badgered youngster; "Mr. Mustardseed and I are not on speaking terms."

"Very likely not," chuckles the skipper, as he proceeds to thrust his nose curiously into the warrant-officers' little boxes. On arriving at the gun-room, he merely glances, with a well-bred air of assumed indifference, at the apartment of the officers, with whose habits and arrangements he scarcely ever ventures to meddle. He next dives into the cockpit, which in a frigate is used only for the purser's store-room, leading to the bread-room, both of which he examines carefully. The spirit-room hatchway, too, is lifted up for his inspection, as well as that of the after-hold. He then takes a survey of the cable tiers, which are lighted up for the occasion; as also different store-rooms of the boatswain, gunner, and carpenter; all of which ought to be objects of his particular care, for it is of great consequence that every article they contain should not only have an assigned and well-known place, but that it should actually be kept in that place. It is, indeed, quite wonderful how much may be done in the way of stowage by dint of good management. In a well-regulated ship, there is not a bolt or a bar, nor

any kind of tool belonging to the carpenter, nor a single rope great or small; canvas fine as duck, or coarse as No. 1, belonging to the boatswain; nor any description of warlike store in charge of the gunner, which cannot instantly be laid hold of, and conveyed in half a minute to any part of the ship, low or aloft.

At length, when every square inch of the holds, tiers, sail-rooms, and all the cabins and berths below, have been examined, the visitation party return to the quarter-deck, after a full half-hour's ramble. As the captain re-ascends to the different decks in succession, the men, who have never budged from their divisions, again pluck off their hats, the marines carry arms the moment his head shows above the coamings, and all the officers stop instantaneously in the middle of their walk to salute their commander, as he once more treads the quarter-deck.

"And now, sir," says the captain, turning to the first lieutenant, "if you please we will rig the church."

CHAPTER XII.

THE SHIP CHURCH.

THE carpenters and the watch on deck soon carry aft their benches and mess-stools; but these not being sufficient to afford accommodation for all hands, as many capstan-bars as may be required are likewise brought up and placed athwart the quarter-deck, with their ends resting on match-tubs and fire-buckets, or on the carronade-slides. These seats occupy the whole of the space from the break of the quarter-deck and the belaying bits round the mainmast, as far as the companion-hatchway. Chairs from the cabin and gun-room are also placed abaft all, for the captain and officers, and on the lee side for the warrant officers and mids; for, it need scarcely be mentioned that due subordination is made to keep its place even in our church.

The pulpit stands amidships, either on the after-gratings, or on the deck immediately before the hatchway. In some ships, this part of the nautical church establishment consists of a moveable reading-desk, made expressly for the occasion, but brought up from the carpenter's store-room only when wanted; sometimes one of the binnacles is used for this purpose; and I remember a ship in which the prayer-book was regularly laid on a sword-rack, or stand, holding six dozen naked cutlasses. The desk is covered over with a signal-flag, as well as the hassock for the chaplain to kneel upon, which is usually a grape or canister shot-box, surmounted by a cheese of great-gun wads, to make it soft.

All this implies that the weather is fine, the awnings spread overhead, and the curtains stretched fore and aft, to keep out the heat and glare. In rainy or blustering weather, the church is rigged under the half-deck, much in the same way, except that the pulpit is placed between two of the guns, and generally on the larboard side, as nearly abreast of the quarter-deck ladder as may be.

When all is ready, the bell is tolled by one of the quarter-masters; and the crew, quietly clustering aft, occupy the bars, stools, planks, and gun-slides, prepared for their accommodation. The marines range themselves on the front seats; while the officers take their places, of course not avowedly in the order of date in their commissions, but, more or less, they do fall into their respective stations according to seniority. The chaplain is now informed that every one is assembled; or, if there be no clergyman on board, the report is made to the captain, who generally officiates in that case. When the service begins, if there be any other ship in company, a pendant, such as men-of-war carry at their mast-head to distinguish them from merchant-ships, is hoisted at the mizen peak, to show that the ship's company are at prayers. This signal, which is kept flying during the performance of divine service, is respected by every other ship, whether commanded by a superior officer or not.

Besides the prayers, which, as I have already mentioned, are "according to the Liturgy of the Church of England, established by law," the chaplain gives a short discourse, not exceeding at most twenty or twenty-five minutes in length. Some captains are in the habit of reading a sermon; but more commonly, when there is no clergyman on board, the prayers are deemed sufficient. These points, as may be supposed, become frequent matters of discussion in the fleet. I shall not enter into them further just now than by observing, that the majority of right-thinking officers appear to agree, that if the church service on board ship be not "solemnly, orderly, and reverently performed," according to the terms and in the spirit of the first article of war, it is either useless or worse than useless. It ought therefore to take place as regularly and habitually as the nature of the ship's duties will allow of. In the next place, it seems clear, that if the service be rendered so long, or be otherwise so conducted, as not to arrest the attention of the crew, or not to maintain it alive when once fixed, it is too long.

I will venture to say, there is rarely to be met with anywhere a more orderly or a more attentive congregation, in all respects, than on board a man-of-war.

But, notwithstanding all Jack's decorum and his discipline, to say nothing of his natural inclination, when duly encouraged, to reflect seriously and properly on any subject, as he is made of ordinary flesh and bones, his eyes will sometimes refuse to keep open under the infliction of a dull or ill-delivered discourse; so that if the person who officiates happens not to read very well, his best chance for securing any useful attention consists in the brevity of his prelections. If the quality, rather than the quantity, of instruction be his object; or if he measure the good he hopes to do, not so much by what his lips give out, as what the ears of his congregation are willing to take in, he should be exceedingly careful not to fatigue his hearers. The inverse rule of proportion obtains here with such mortifying regularity, that a captain will almost inevitably discover, by some of the thousand and one methods he has of knowing what is felt amongst his crew, that the longer he makes the church service beyond the mark of agreeable and easy attention, the more certain will he be of missing his point.

The analogy, not to speak it profanely, between overloading a gun and overloading a discourse,

applies especially to ship-preaching. Sailors are such odd fellows, that they are nowise moved by noise and smoke ; but they well know how to value a good aim, and always love and honour a commanding-officer who truly respects their feelings, ministers in a gentlemanlike way to their peculiar tastes and habits, and neither bullies them in the course of their ordinary duty, nor by means of long-winded and ill-timed discourses (or what they irreverently call psalm-singing), interferes too much with their religious concerns.

It would be easy, though perhaps rather invidious, to point out in what other respects many officers are apt, besides the protracted length of the church service on Sunday, to err in excess in these matters. I am very sorry to say, it would be still easier to show in what respects all of us err in defect. The utility of such exposure, however, is more than questionable ; for it might perhaps irritate to no purpose, or even make bad worse ; and if so, it is surely no compromise of principle to avoid touching on faults in a manner which would aggravate the evil. I should rejoice much more in being able to make officers who have not sufficiently reflected on these things, duly sensible that it is quite as much to their immediate professional advantage, as it is, of course, to their eventual chance of happiness, that the religious duties of their ship should form an essential part of the discipline of the crew, and be considered not less useful in a moral point of view, than rigging the masts properly is to the nautical department of their command.

If, indeed, religion, when applied to the ordinary business of life, should be found inconsistent with those moral obligations which are dictated to us by conscience ; or if its observances were found in practice to impede the progress of duties which it was obviously imperative upon us to execute ; or even were we to discover that the ablest, most virtuous, and most successful persons amongst us were uniformly despisers of religion, then there would certainly be some explanation, not to say excuse, for young and inexperienced men venturing to dispute on such subjects, and claiming the bold privilege of absolutely independent thought and action. But surely there is neither excuse nor explanation, nor indeed any sound justification whatsoever, for the presumption of those who, in the teeth of all experience and authority, not only trust themselves with the open expression of these cavils, but, having settled the whole question in their own way, take the hazardous line of recommending their daring example to those around them. It is also material to recollect, that there is not a single point of duty in the whole range of the naval profession, which, when well understood, may not be enforced with greater efficiency by a strict adherence to the sanctions of religion, than if it were attempted single-handed ; so that most of the objections which one hears made to the due performance of the church service on board ship, on the score of its interfering with the discipline, are quite absurd, and inapplicable to the circumstances of the case.

It cannot be denied, however, that the nature and degree of attention devoted to such things in a man-of-war must be left very much to the individual feelings and discretion of the captain, who will do well to reflect seriously upon the charge on his shoulders, and not allow indolence, or any worse influences, to check the good he has it in his power to accomplish, or to render him careless of the vast evil he may indirectly produce. The mental instruction of his people, and especially of the young gentlemen under his care, ought always to form one of his most anxious duties. It may be easily imagined that, in certain respects, he acts under great disadvantages ; but, on the other hand, perhaps he may possess, at all times, a degree of influence over their minds and habits which hardly any parent, certainly few schoolmasters, can be supposed to exercise at any time. The very nature of a ship's discipline disposes, I might almost say compels, a lad to ready acquiescence in the dictates, and even remote suggestions, of those in authority over him ; and although a captain should most carefully avoid substituting mere authority for calm and genuine persuasion, in this more than in any other case, there can be no doubt that much of the heartless wear and tear of that presumptuous scepticism, which is so rife amongst people not subjected to discipline of any kind, except what originates in their own minds, owes its rise and nurture to habitual disregard for all authority in other matters. Much of this improper spirit a judicious commander may check, if he cannot entirely correct ; and he may insensibly turn the thoughts of his young friends into those channels where they will perhaps be astonished to find the authorities they are holding so cheap going cheerfully and usefully hand in hand with everything that is great or good in the world. They will then discover not only the goodness and justice of that God, whose service, to use the beautiful language of the Liturgy, is perfect freedom ; but they will, at the same time, understand how great a mistake it is to suppose that a due veneration for authority has any tendency to weaken conscientious habits of independent thought. The very reverse is generally the effect of such reliance ; for no men are so likely to strike out original ideas, or to execute public services in a new and vigorous style of their own, as those who have already studied with patient and respectful attention all that has been done before them, and who look up with confidence to those who have attained well-merited distinction in their profession or in the world.

If this be sound doctrine, the responsibility of a commanding-officer is very heavy ; because, although he certainly ought to be careful not unduly to discourage independent thought amongst the young persons under his care, still less should he prevent their investigating all or any of these subjects for themselves ; but, at the same time, he ought, as far as he possibly can, to give their minds a bias towards the side of rational conviction rather than of distrust. I mean, that he should be more anxious to encourage them to search for confirmations of the opinions already supported by venerable authority, than to discover flaws in their evidence.

Much of the result of almost every inquiry depends upon the key in which we first pitch our minds, and the sincerity of our purpose ; or, in other words, the temper in which we begin to screw ourselves up to undertake any difficult investigation. And I am Tory enough to believe that great good may often be effected by com-

mencing with an admission that almost everything long sanctioned by authority is probably right.

The captain of a man-of-war, therefore, if his influence be as well-founded as it ought, may, in this most material of all respects, essentially supply the place of a parent to young persons, who must be considered for the time virtually as orphans. He may very possibly not be learned enough to lay before his large nautical family the historical and other external evidences of Christianity, and, perhaps, may have it still less in his power to make them fully aware of the just force of its internal evidences. But he can seldom have any doubt as to his duty in this case more than in any other department of the weighty obligations with which he is charged; and if he cannot here, as elsewhere, make the lads under his care see distinctly, in the main, what course it best becomes them to follow, he is hardly fit for his station. I freely own that it is far beyond his power to make them pursue that line, if they choose to be perverse; but he will neglect an important, I might add, a sacred and solemn part of his business, if he leaves their minds more adrift on the score of religion than he can possibly help. Their steering in this ticklish navigation, it is true, depends upon their own prudence; but it is his bounden duty to provide them with both a rudder and a compass, and also, as far as he is able, to instruct them, like a good pilot, in the course they ought to shape. The eventual success of the great voyage of life lies with themselves; the captain's duty as a moral commander-in-chief is done if he sets his juvenile squadron fairly under weigh.

It grieves me heartily to own, that while I speak with so much confidence of the good which may be effected on the minds of midshipmen, I feel scarcely anything but despair on turning to the case of the sailors. They are such a strange set of beings, generally so entirely uneducated, and although, as I have repeatedly mentioned before, by no means naturally irreligious, often so totally destitute of anything deserving the name of principle, or even of any groundwork of habitual reflection, upon which alone such a superstructure can be raised, that I really cannot venture even to conjecture how people of such very loose habits and dissipated minds are to be turned permanently to right thinking on this matter. Unfortunately, too, at the end of every three or four years, when at length the discipline of a ship has been perfected, and the empire of order so fully established, that the influence of authority might, if ever, be expected to produce something out of these rough materials, the crew are not only paid off, but turned absolutely adrift into the worst holes and corners, the very sinks of society, where everything good they have been taught, and everything good they may have hoped or wished to learn, is speedily taken from them, and all sorts of iniquity poured into their place! In one moment are rudely swept away all their habitual veneration for authority, their cheerful, unreflecting dependence on others, together with every nascent feeling of self-respect, which during several years had been growing up together, and rather inviting than repelling the final and pervading influence of religion. Thus the unhappy sailor is suddenly left at the close of his long toil in a state of destitution fully worse than at first. In a few days, perhaps hours, after landing, he is pillaged of his money and every rag of clothes, except the jacket on his back; and after being forced into drunkenness and every kind of debauchery and vice, he finds himself worn out with disease and intemperance, and becomes literally an outcast from society, amidst the most heartless and profligate of his species, helpless, useless, and hopeless!

However melancholy, therefore, the reflection may be, it is in vain to conceal from ourselves, that unless both officers and men can be embodied more or less as a permanent corps, every ship that is commissioned merely furnishes a sort of fresh experiment in naval discipline. The officers are brought together without any previous acquaintance with one another; and many of them, after a long residence on shore, have lost most of their naval habits. The sailors, being collected how and where we can get hold of them, are too frequently the off-scourings and scum of society. With such a heterogeneous crew, the first year is employed in teaching them habits of cleanliness and common decency; and it is only in the third year of their service that the ship becomes really efficient. Just as that point has been reached, all hands, as I said before, are turned off, to make room for another experiment. If a few active men of the crew have become better sailors, they generally go into the merchant-service for higher wages; while the officers are again laid on the shelf. Something has been done lately to retain the petty officers in the navy, but perhaps not enough. It has been suggested, that instead of giving men pensions for long servitude, it might be more useful to allow their wages to increase gradually year by year, at some small rate, and at the end of fourteen years give them half-pay of the rating to which they had reached, if they chose to retire.

There are various other circumstances which I have not touched upon, that, I suspect, will for ever prevent the Navy being rendered a permanent embodied corps; and perhaps, upon the whole, it may be questioned whether this would be advantageous to the country, or quite the contrary. This topic, however, is of far too great extent to be treated incidentally.

I shall have occasion, in another place, to describe more particularly the philanthropic exertions of my friend Captain Robert Elliot, of the Navy, and several other officers on shore, who are not so hopeless as I confess I sometimes am myself upon this matter; and who, with the most disinterested public spirit, devote their whole time and thoughts to the reformation of their unhappy brethren of the blue jacket.

In returning to the subject of the church, it must be remembered that the circumstances of wind and weather will often interfere with the regularity of our Sunday service. To which it may be added, that the public duty upon which the ship is employed must often modify these observances very much, in spite of all our endeavours. In some parts of an Indian voyage, for instance, it may be safely calculated that no interruption will take place; while there occur other stages of the passage when Divine service must of necessity be stopped, to shorten sail or trim the

yards. In peace-time, or in harbour, or in fine weather at sea, no such teasing interference is likely to arise; but in war, and on board a cruising ship, the public service frequently calls a ship's company to exchange smartly their Bibles and Prayer-books for the sponges and rammers. The collect in which they have petitioned to be defended from the fear of their enemies, and that their time might be passed in rest and quietness, may hardly have passed their lips, before they are eagerly and joyfully scampering up the rigging to shake the reefs out in chase of an enemy, with whom, in the next hour, they will perhaps be engaged in hot fight!

I remember once in a frigate, cruising deep in the Bay of Biscay, just as the captain had finished the Litany, and the purser, whose greatest pleasure it was to officiate as clerk, had said Amen, that the man at the main royal-mast head screamed out,

"A strange sail, broad on the lee bow!"

The first effect of this announcement was to make the commander turn round involuntarily to the man at the wheel and exclaim, "Put the helm up!" He then closed the book, with a degree of energy of which he was made somewhat ashamed when the sound was echoed by that of the rapidly closing volumes all around him.

"My lads," said he quickly, but not without solemnity, "our duty to our King is our duty to God; and if, as I hope, this sail turn out to be the ship we have been so long looking after, you will not give a worse account of her to the country, I am sure, for having applied in good earnest for assistance from aloft." After which, suddenly changing his tone and manner, he sung out loudly and clearly,

"Hands, make sail! Let go the bow-lines! Round in the weather braces! Mast-head, there! let me know when the strange sail is right ahead!"

Then leaping on the hammocks, and resting his glass against the after-swifter of the main rigging, he swept the horizon impatiently for the stranger. Meanwhile, the rattling of the chairs, capstan-bars, match-tubs, and shot-boxes, gave token of the rapid demolition of our nautical church. The studding-sail booms shot out like spears from the yard arms, and the sails which these spars were to expand hung dangling and flapping in the air, as if the canvas had been alive, and joined in the eagerness of the chase; while the gay ship herself, trembling fore and aft under these fresh and spirit-stirring impulses, dashed away at the rate of ten and a half.

Such are the incidents which happen on board single frigates; those rattling, joyous, fly-along, Salee-rover sort of cruisers, which range at large over the wide ocean, scour every coast, and keep the war famously alive. A much more stately ceremonial is observed on board fleets, whether at sea, blockading a port, or lying in harbour. The ships of the different divisions, or squadrons, wait till the admiral hoists at his mizen-peak the signal indicating that Divine service has commenced, the bell is then tolled in each of the other ships, the usual pendant is displayed, and the first article of war (already quoted) is complied with, not only to the letter, but often, we may hope and trust, fully up to the spirit. At all events, I have heard many clergymen declare that they never beheld any congregation in which more attention and decorum prevailed than in our ship churches.

At sea, both in fleets and on board single ships, the afternoon of Sunday is generally a season of rest and quietness; but in harbour it is frequently the most annoying period of the whole week. There is nothing for the men to do, and the time hangs terribly heavy on their hands; to which it must be added, that our ships are too often infested by some of the vilest contaminations of the shore. Bad as these influences are, at any time or place, I believe they may be considered at their worst when they come afloat; so that, whenever it can possibly be done without injury to the service, portions of the ship's company should be allowed to go on shore in turn, albeit their proceedings when 'on liberty,' as they call it, are none of the most commendable. But we must let that pass. In foreign ports, however, this indulgence is frequently impossible; and in cases when the people cannot be permitted to land, the different men-of-war in company are sure to send boat-loads of visitors, or what are called 'liberty men,' on board one another's ships, to pass the afternoon of Sunday. This practice is the very bane of good discipline, and ought at all times to be discouraged in every way; for it almost inevitably leads to drunkenness, rioting, and bitter heart-burnings. It has, moreover, the effect of making the men discontented with their own ship and their own officers. The sailors are sufficiently sharp criticisers of the conduct of their superiors, even when they have all the facts before them, and the power of observing closely, and from day to day. But when they pass on board other vessels, and interchange exaggerations over an extra pot of grog, the mischievous consequence is certain; for each of the parties is likely enough to break up the visit miserably discontented, and to return under a thorough conviction that, while everything done in their own ship is wrong, all the officers are either foolish or tyrannical, or both. If there must be ship-visiting (for which, however, I can see no necessity), let it be on week days, and in the morning; but, clearly, the less the better; and most assuredly it ought never to be allowed on Sunday evening.

CHAPTER XIII.

NAVAL RATINGS AND SEA PAY. MUSTERING CLOTHES.

THE dinner-hour on Sunday is noon, the same as on other days; but there is this distinction, which ought to mark the afternoon in every well-regulated ship, the people are never disturbed between twelve o'clock and four, unless some particular service occurs which cannot without impropriety be deferred. It is customary during the rest of the week to turn the watch up at one o'clock, but on Sunday, if possible, the people should be left alone: to be idle, if they choose it, or to read, or otherwise to employ themselves according to their own fancy. This, after all, is but a trifling indulgence, which costs the public service little or no sacrifice, and hardly ever puts the captain or officers to any inconvenience.

Even if it did, what would it matter? The interests of the country will not be worse attended to in the long-run for an occasional relaxation of strict etiquettes and formal observances. It is always such a vast affair to carry with us the kindly feelings of the men, even in trifles, that if the captain, before piping to dinner on Sunday, takes in the royals, hauls down the flying jib, and otherwise arranges the sails, to lessen the chances of having to call the people on deck, his attention will not go unremarked. Even if the ship be making a passage, and that, in strictness, all sail ought to be carried, no eventual loss will ever attend such very trivial abatement of speed; for the men will probably be far more active in making and shortening sail at other times, when their minor comforts are thus regarded, than when treated as if they have no feelings to be considered.

The circumstance which most distinctly marks the afternoon of Sunday on board a man-of-war, even more than on land, is the absence of all the usual stir caused by the multifarious occupations of the artificers and crew. The fire in the armourer's forge, abreast of the fore-hatchway being extinguished, the rattle of his hammer, and the gritting of his rasp, are no more heard. The wearing and tearing of the adzes and axes, planes and saws of the carpenter, cease to torment the ear. The spunyarn-reel of the forecastlemen is stopped in its revolutions, and stowed away till Monday. The noisy thump-thumping of the cocoa-pounder is laid asleep. The bayonets of the marines, the cutlasses and boarding-pikes of the sailors, and all other weapons of offence, have some respite given to their points and edges. The tailors close their shears, and bundle up their remnants; while the sail-makers draw off their palms, and thrust their stools on one side. Even were it not an affair of duty, sheer weariness would generally enforce the fourth commandment on board a man-of-war, and the delicious day of rest be most fully enjoyed at sea.

It must be owned, indeed, that on the lower deck of a man-of-war on Sunday afternoon, between dinner-time and the hour of tea, or evening grog, a cast of idleness is the most characteristic feature. Groups of men may be seen sitting on the deck chatting over very old stories, a few are reading, and many are stretched out flat on their backs fast asleep, or dosing with their heads laid on their arms on the mess-table. But the habit of locomotion amongst sailors is so strong, that there are always numerous parties walking on the main deck in pairs, or in threes and fours, along a short space, backwards and forwards, although there seems no reason why their walk should not be twice or thrice as long. Both sides of the forecastle, too, and the lee-gangway, are generally filled with these walking philosophers, as they may in truth be called; for they enjoy the hour that passes, and are ready to take whatever comes in good part. The weather-gangway is usually left for the occasional transits of that most restless of mortals, the officer of the watch, who, as in duty bound, is eternally fidgetting about the trim of the sails, and must often step forward to the chestree, from whence, while resting his foot on the tack-block of the mainsail, he may cast his eye aloft to detect something to alter in the position of the head-yards. Or if he hears any noise in the galley, or even on the lower deck, he can walk forward till he is able to peer down the fore-hatchway, by stooping under the bows of the boat on the booms. Most of this fidget probably arises, not so much from any wish to find fault with what is wrong, as to maintain what is right. The true preventive service of an officer is to interpose his superintending vigilance between the temptation, on the part of the men, to err, and their first motion towards offence. Were this principle fully acted up to in all ships, how rapidly might not our punishments subside!

At four, or half-past four in the afternoon, the merry pipe to supper awakes the sleepers, arrests the peripatetics, and once more clusters young and old round the mess-table. At sunset the drum beats to quarters, when the men's names are carefully called over, and the sobriety of each ascertained. Other duties may be intermitted on the day of rest, but not that of the guns, which are minutely examined, and all their appendages got ready every evening with as much earnest care as if the ship were that instant sailing into action. A moment's reflection, indeed, will show that there can, of course, be no difference in this respect between Sunday and any other evening. Then come in succession the following routine orders, and their correspondent evolutions:—"Reef topsails!" "Stand by the hammocks!" "Pipe down!" "Roll up the cloths!" "Call the watch!" "Pipe the sweepers!" And thus, at last, the first day of the week at sea, in a man-of-war, is at an end.

It is usual on board most ships to read the articles of war on the first Sunday in every month; and as the captain is instructed by the Regulations of the Service to make frequent musters of the ship's company, this important ceremony is performed at the same time. The object is to see that every man is rated on the ship's books according to his real qualifications. Instead of beating to divisions, the hands are turned up to muster, when the whole crew assemble on deck.

In old times, I recollect, the fashion was for the men to press aft in a disorganised crowd; but of late years the following more appropriate and orderly arrangement has been universally adopted. The men are distributed in a close double row round the quarter-deck gangways and forecastle, each standing in his place according to the order of his name on the Open List. A small table is then brought up, on which are spread the muster-books; and the captain's clerk, who is the only person seated, begins calling over the names. Each man, as his turn comes, pulls off his hat, smooths down his hair, and passes over from the lee side of the deck to the weather side, stepping across the gratings just before the binnacle. The captain stands to windward, so that the men advance directly up towards him, and then pass forward in review. By this means, not only the captain, but the officers, who, of course, are all present, become better acquainted with the men, learn their names, and ascertain their respective ratings and merits. The first lieutenant plants himself at the captain's elbow to furnish such general information as may be required, or to appeal for more minute details to the other lieutenants, warrant-officers, mates, or midshipmen, as the case may be.

The captain avails himself of this public opportunity of telling any of the men that they have been advanced a step on the books since the last muster; and if these intimations be given without parade, and in good taste, they afford great satisfaction to the people, though it may often happen that the changes of rating are almost nominal. It is a great point gained in all discipline, if the persons we wish to influence can be made duly sensible that their merits and exertions are not neglected. It is obvious, too, that if giving a man a higher rating be a source of encouragement, to disrate him may readily be used as a means of punishment. I remember, in the Lyra, on my way home from China, in 1817, that the captain of the foretop, a fine active lad from North Shields, got into some scrape, not quite bad enough to bring him within reach of the terrible gangway, but close to it, and I was rather perplexed how to chastise the offender. The first Sunday in the month was close at hand, so I waited till this man's name was called, and then, after a suitable lecture, desired the clerk, in the hearing of the whole ship's company, to change his rating to that of able seaman from captain of the top. The poor fellow looked bewildered, and, instead of passing on when another name was called, stood stock-still half-way across the deck.

"Don't you hear?" I said; "you are no longer captain of the foretop, you are disrated on the ship's books."

I then turned to the clerk to see the entry properly made; but on looking again at the disrated seaman, I observed, to my astonishment, that he was in tears!

I certainly had not reckoned upon such a scene; but it at once flashed upon me, that here was an opportunity of gaining two important points. The first and most obvious of which was, to nail this particular man's future good services by enlisting all that was hearty in his nature at the instant of its strongest expression; and the next, to avail myself of the circumstance to stamp a still higher degree of importance in the eyes of the men than before upon the value of these ratings. I therefore instantly called out to the clerk to stop his pen; and then addressing the man, in a voice loud enough to be heard by all the crew, said, I was quite sure any one who felt so sensibly the degradation implied in the loss of rank which he had just incurred, was never likely to expose himself again to such a risk. I should therefore not only give him back his former rating, and replace him in his station as captain of the top, but assure him that all trace both of his offence and its punishment should from that moment be entirely forgotten.

It is hardly within the range of popular explanation to show in what particulars the different shades of technical merit consist, by which many of these ratings are awarded. The letters A. B., which mean Able Seaman, are placed against the names of those only who are thorough-bred sailors, or who, in sea phrase, can not only 'hand, reef, and steer,' but are likewise capable of heaving the lead in the darkest night, as well as in the daytime; who can use the palm and needle of a sailmaker; and who are versed in every part of a ship's rigging, in the stowage of the hold, and in the exercise of the great guns. Of course, an A.B. must be able to pull an oar, as well as use it in sculling, understand the management of a boat under sail, and know how to cross a surf. He must also learn the art of placing an anchor in a boat, in order to its being laid out; and how to get it in again when weighed. In these, and twenty other things which might be pointed out, he ought to be examined by the boatswain and other officers before his rating of A. B. is fully established on the books.

The higher ratings of quarter-master, gunner's mate, captain of the forecastle and of the tops, and so on, are given chiefly to men who may not, in fact, know more than every Able Seaman is supposed to be acquainted with, but who have recommended themselves by their superior activity and vigilance, and have not only shown themselves fit to command others by their decision of character, but evinced a sincere anxiety to see the work of their department well performed. It is of great consequence to assist in every way the authority of these leading hands over the other men stationed in the same part of the ship; and judicious officers will generally be able to avail themselves to great purpose, in moments of trial, of the energetic co-operation of these persons. Much of the internal, or what may be called domestic, discipline of the crew, depends upon the conduct of these men; for each mess has one of them at its head, who is held more or less responsible for the behaviour of the people in that knot or party. I have, however, known some officers exact a great deal too much from these captains of the messes, and expect them to become spies and informers against their companions; or, which is just as unreasonable, hold them fully answerable for all delinquencies committed in their part of the ship. This is cruel; because, although they undoubtedly may contribute materially towards the maintenance of good order, they cannot, by possibility, do more than act as assistants to the first lieutenant, and chiefly by explaining to the rest of the people what is required of them. Most men in the long-run, and perhaps in all ranks of society, but certainly on board a man-of-war, find it so much more agreeable in every respect to do what is right than what is wrong, that when they come distinctly to know what is wanted, they almost invariably set about executing it cheerfully. The first grand point, therefore, in the ship's discipline, after a system has been adopted which shall be consistent in all its parts, is, to let the details of this system be thoroughly understood by every one on board. When a good plan has been once fixed upon, and the officers are vigilant, patient, and exact in their own personal conduct, and the leading men have been made fully acquainted with what is required, the rest of the crew will be but too happy to do their duty manfully and well, without the instrumentality of the lash, except in extreme cases.

In former times, the distinctions amongst ratings of the seamen on the ship's books were so few, that it was impossible to discriminate correctly, or to assign to each man, with any justice, the exact rating which his knowledge of seamanship, his experience in the exercise of that knowledge, his general good conduct, and his abilities, might entitle him to. An Order in Council, dated

November, 1816, established a new system of Ratings; and by another Order, dated the 23rd of June, 1824, "the net sea pay of the flag-officers of His Majesty's fleet" was established, "together with the net sea pay and number of their retinue; the number of commissioned, warrant, petty, and non-commissioned officers, and the ratings of every description both of seamen and marines, allowed to each class of His Majesty's ships, with their rates of net sea pay respectively; and distinguishing the several classes for sharing the produce of seizures."

The tables which follow are so clear that they seem to require no particular explanation.

It is probable that the pay of several classes of Naval Officers will be modified in consequence of the Report of the Naval and Military Commission. In the meantime, I give the following tables from the only source I have access to, viz.—the Navy List, published "by authority," by Mr. John Murray.

CLASSES AND DENOMINATIONS OF HER MAJESTY'S SHIPS.

1. Rated Ships, viz.:—
   - *First Rate.*—All Three-decked Ships.
   - *Second Rate.*—One of Her Majesty's Yachts, and all Two-decked Ships whose war complements consist of 700 men and upwards.
   - *Third Rate.*—Her Majesty's other Yachts, and all such Yachts as may bear the Flag or Pendant of an Admiral or Captain Superintending one of Her Majesty's Dock-yards; and all Ships whose complements are under 700 and not less than 600.
   - *Fourth Rate.*—Ships whose complements are under 600 and not less than 400.
   - *Fifth Rate.*—Ships whose complements are under 400 and not less than 250.
   - *Sixth Rate.*—Ships under 250.
2. Sloops and Bomb-Vessels; all such as are commanded by Commanders.
3. All other smaller Vessels; such as are commanded by Lieutenants or inferior officers.

FLAG PAY.

	Per Day £. s. d.
Admiral of the Fleet	6 0 0
Admiral	5 0 0
Vice-Admiral	4 0 0
Rear-Admiral, or Commodore of the First Class / Captain of the Fleet	3 0 0

SEA PAY per Day, besides which every Commander-in-Chief shall receive a further sum of 3*l.* per Day, while his Flag shall be flying within the limits of his Station.

SURGEONS.

Surgeons shall be paid in all Rates according to their length of Service (including more than Three Years' time as an Assistant Surgeon, or Hospital Mate), viz.:—

	Per Day.
Surgeons of less than Six Years' Service	£0 10 0
Surgeons of more than Six and less than Ten Years' Service	0 11 0
Surgeons of more than Ten and less than Twenty Years' Service	0 14 0
Surgeons of more than Twenty Years' Service	0 16 0
Surgeons of Hospital Ships, of whatever length of Service	0 18 0

In Flag Ships all the Lieutenants (including one extra as Flag Lieutenant) are allowed 6*d.* per Diem in addition to their Pay.

	Per Day.
Master of the Fleet	£0 10 11
Physician of the Fleet of less than Three Years' Service as such	1 1 0
Physician of the Fleet of more than Three, and less than Ten Years' Service	£1 11 6
Physician of the Fleet of more than Ten Years' Service	2 2 0
Secretary to the Admiral of the Fleet	1 7 4
Secretary to an Admiral, Commander-in-Chief	1 1 11
Secretary to a Vice or Rear-Admiral, Commander-in-Chief	0 16 5
Secretary to a Junior Flag Officer or Commodore	0 8 2
Two Clerks to Secretaries of Commanders-in-Chief, each	0 3 4
One Clerk to Secretaries of Junior Flag Officers or Commodores	0 2 9
Admiral's Coxswain	0 1 9
Admiral's Steward / Admiral's Cook / Admiral's Domestics *	0 1 2

* The numbers of these Ratings for the

Admiral of the Fleet	12
Admiral	10
Vice-Admiral	7
Rear Admiral, or Commodore of the First Class	5
Captain of the Fleet	3

Rates of Half Pay at present established for the Navy and Marines.

(Payable Quarterly.)

FLAG OFFICERS.

	Per Day.
Admiral of the Fleet	£3 3 0
Admirals	2 2 0
Vice-Admirals	1 12 6
Rear ditto	1 5 0

CAPTAINS.

To each of the first 100 as they stand on the general List of Officers in Seniority	0 14 6
To each of the next 150	0 12 6
To the rest	0 10 6

COMMANDERS.

To each of the first 150 on the List	0 10 0
To the remainder	0 8 6

LIEUTENANTS.

To each of the first 300 on the List	0 7 0
To each of the next 700	0 6 0
To the remainder	0 5 0

ROYAL MARINES.

Colonels	0 14 6
Lieutenant-Colonels	0 11 0
Majors	0 9 6
Captains	0 7 0
First Lieutenants of Seven Years' standing	0 4 6
The rest	0 4 0
Second Lieutenants	0 3 0

MASTERS.

To the first 100 on the List (being qualified for first or second rates)	0 7 0
To the next 200 (being qualified for third or fourth rates)	0 6 0
The remainder, having served 5 Years in the Navy, 2 of which as acting or second Master, or as Master's Mate or Midshipman	0 5 0

MEDICAL OFFICERS.

Physicians—After 10 Years' Service	1 1 0
— 3 Years	0 15 0
Under that time	0 10 6

SURGEONS.

Six Years' Service	0 6 0
Under that time	0 5 0

TABLE *showing the War Complement of Naval and Marine Officers in all Classes of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels, with the Number of Seamen and Royal Marines, and the Net Monthly Sea Pay of each Person on board.*

Classes for Distribution of Salaries.	RANKS AND RATINGS.	FIRST RATE. — All Three-decked Ships. Pay per Month.			SECOND RATE. One of His Majesty's Yachts, and all Two-decked Ships of 80 Guns and upwards. Pay per Month.			THIRD RATE. His Majesty's other Yachts, and all Ships of 70 Guns, and less than 80. Pay per Month.			FOURTH RATE. Ships of 50 Guns, and less than 70. Pay per Month.			FIFTH RATE. — Ships of 26 Guns, and less than 50. Pay per Month.			SIXTH RATE. No 1. Ships of 24 Guns, and less than 26. Pay per Month.			SIXTH RATE. No 2. Sloops. 100 Men, and upwards. Pay per Month.			Sloops. Under 100 Men. Pay per Month.			Bombs. — Pay per Month.			SIXTH RATE, No 3. Gun-Brigs, Cutters, Schooners, and other small Vessels. Pay per Month.			Classes for Distribution of Salaries.
		No.	£	s.	d.	No.	£	s.	d.	No.	£	s.	d.	No.	£	s.	d.	No.	£	s.	d.	No.	£	s.	d.	No.	£	s.	d.	No.	£	s.	d.	No.	£	s.	d.	
I.	Captain	1	61	7	4	1	53	14	0	1	46	0	8	1	38	7	0	1	30	13	8	1	26	17	0														I.
	Commander	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	23	0	4	1	23	0	4	1	23	0	4	
II.	First Lieutenant of seven years' standing	8	11	10	0	7	11	10	0	6	11	10	0																								II.
	All other Lieutenants		9	4	0		9	4	0		9	4	0	5	9	4	0	4	9	4	0	3	9	4	0	2	9	4	0	2	9	4	0	2	9	4	0	
	Master	1	13	0	8	1	12	5	4	1	11	10	0	1	10	14	8	1	9	4	0	1	8	8	8	1	7	13	4	1	7	13	4	1	7	13	4	
III.	Chaplain	1	12	5	4	1	12	5	4	1	12	5	4	1	12	5	4	1	12	5	4	1	12	5	4												III.
	Surgeon	1	as above.			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	7	0	0	1	.....			1	.....						
	Purser	1	7	0	0	1	7	0	0	1	7	0	0	1	7	0	0	1	7	0	0	1	7	0	0	1	7	0	0	1	7	0	0	1	7	0	0	
	Second Master	1	5	9	4	1	5	9	4	1	5	9	4	1	5	9	4	1	4	14	0	1	4	14	0												
	Assistant Surgeon	3	9	4	0	3	9	4	0	2	9	4	0	2	9	4	0	1	9	4	0	1	9	4	0	1	9	4	0	1	9	4	0	1	9	4	0	
	Gunner	1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....						
	Boatswain	1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....						
	Carpenter, with 7s. per Month additional for tools in every rate	1	7	15	4	1	7	0	0	1	6	4	8	1	5	9	4	1	5	1	8	1	4	14	0	1	4	14	0	1	4	14	0				
IV.	Master's Mate	24	3	18	8	20	3	18	8	16	3	18	8	10	3	18	8	8	3	18	8	6	3	18	8	2	3	18	8	2	3	18	8	1	3	18	8	IV.
	Midshipman		2	8	0		2	8	0		2	8	0		2	8	0		2	8	0		2	8	0	2	2	8	0	2	2	8	0		2	8	0	
	Master's Assistant	6	3	11	0	6	3	11	0	6	3	11	0	4	3	11	0	4	3	11	0	4	3	11	0	2	3	11	0	2	3	11	0	2	3	11	0	
	Schoolmaster	1	4	14	0	1	4	6	4	1	4	6	4	1	3	18	8	1	3	11	0	1	3	11	0												
	Clerk	1	4	14	0	1	4	6	4	1	4	6	4	1	3	18	8	1	3	11	0	1	3	11	0	1	3	11	0	1	3	11	0	1	3	11	0	
	Master at Arms	1	2	12	0	1	2	10	0	1	2	8	0	1	2	6	0	1	2	4	0	1	2	2	0												
	Admiral's Cockswain	..	as above.																																		
	Ship's Corporal	2	.....			2	.....			2	.....			2	.....			2	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....						
	Captain's Cockswain	1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....						
	Quarter-Master	12	.....			9	.....			6	.....			5	.....			3	1	17	0	3	1	17	0	2	1	17	0	2	1	17	0	1	1	17	0	
	Gunner's Mate	5	2	6	0	4	2	5	0	3	2	3	0	2	2	1	0	2	1	19	0	2	.....			2	.....			2	.....			1	.....			
	Boatswain's Mate	8	.....			7	.....			6	.....			4	.....			2	.....			2	.....			2	.....			1	.....						
	Captain of Forecastle	3	.....			3	.....			3	.....			2	.....			2	.....			2	.....			2	.....			1	.....						
	Captain of the Hold	1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....																		
	Cockswain of the Launch	1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....																		
	Ship's Cook	1	2	13	6	1	2	13	6	1	2	13	6	1	2	13	6	1	2	13	6	1	2	12	6	1	2	12	6	1	2	12	6	1	2	12	6	
	Sail-maker	1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	2	1	0	
	Rope-maker	1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....						
	Carpenter's Mate, with 7s. per Month additional for Tools in every rate	2	2	12	0	2	2	10	0	2	2	8	0	2	2	6	0	2	2	4	0	2	2	2	0	1	2	1	0	1	2	1	0	1	2	1	0	
	Caulker	1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....						
	Armourer	1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....						
V.	Captain of the Maintop	3	.....			3	.....			3	.....			2	.....			2	.....			2	.....			1	1	16	0								
	Captain of the Foretop	3	.....			3	.....			3	.....			2	.....			2	.....			2	.....			1	.....			1							
	Captain of the Mast	3	.....			3	.....			3	.....			2	.....			2	.....			2	.....														
	Captain of the Afterguard	3	2	1	0	3	2	0	0	3	1	19	0	2	1	18	0	2	1	17	0	2	1	16	0	1	1	16	0								
	Yeoman of Signals	1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....																						
	Cockswain of the Pinnace	1	.....			1	.....			1	.....																										
	Sail-maker's Mate	1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....																		
	Caulker's Mate	1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	1	19	0	1	1	17	0	1	1	17	0	1	1	17	0				
	Armourer's Mate	2	2	6	0	2	2	5	0	2	2	3	0	2	2	1	0	1	1	19	0	1	1	17	0	1	1	17	0	1	1	17	0				
	Cooper	1	.....			1	.....			1	.....			1	.....																						
	Volunteer of the First Class	8	1	2	0	7	1	2	0	6	1	2	0	4	1	2	0	4	1	2	0	5	1	2	0	3	1	2	0	2	1	2	0	1	1	2	0	
	Volunteer of the Second Class	4	1	12	0	4	1	12	0	4	1	12	0	3	1	12	0	3	1	12	0	2	1	12	0	2	1	12	0	2	1	12	0	1	1	12	0	
	Number of Blue Jackets carried forward	124	.....			116	.....			104	.....			79	.....			72	.....			59	.....			45	.....			38	.....			30	.....			16	

Time is always cast or counted by the lunar month of 28 days; so that there are 13 months and 1 day in a Seaman's year. The Officers draw their Pay by 'Quarterly Bills' every 84 days.

To be inserted between pages 68 and 69, SERIES II.

TABLE—*Continued.*

Classes for Distribution of Salaries.	RANKS AND RATINGS.	FIRST RATE. All Three-decked Ships. Pay per Month.			SECOND RATE. One of His Majesty's Yachts, and all Two-decked Ships of 80 Guns and upwards. Pay per Month.			THIRD RATE. His Majesty's other Yachts, and all Ships of 70 Guns, and less than 80. Pay per Month.			FOURTH RATE. Ships of 50 Guns, and less than 70. Pay per Month.			FIFTH RATE. Ships of 38 Guns, and less than 50. Pay per Month.			SIXTH RATE. No. 1. Ships of 24 Guns, and less than 38. Pay per Month.			SIXTH RATE. No. 2. Sloops, 100 Men and upwards. Pay per Month.			SIXTH RATE. No. 2. Sloops, Under 100 Men. Pay per Month.			SIXTH RATE. No. 2. Bombs. Pay per Month.			SIXTH RATE. No. 2. Gun-Brigs, Cutters, Schooners, and other small Vessels. Pay per Month.			Classes for Distribution of Salaries.
		No.	£	s.	d.	No.	£	s.	d.	No.	£	s.	d.	No.	£	s.	d.	No.	£	s.	d.	No.	£	s.	d.	No.	£	s.	d.	No.	£	s.	d.	
	Nos. brought forward	124				116				104				79				72				59				45				38				30				16				
VI.	Gunner's Crew	25				22				20				15				10				8				6				4				2				VI.
	Carpenter's Crew, with 7s. per Month additional for Tools in every rate	18	1	16	0	16	1	16	0	14	1	16	0	12	1	16	0	8	1	16	0	6	1	16	0	4	1	16	0	2	1	16	0					
	Sail-maker's Crew	2				2				2				2				1				1				1												
	Cooper's Crew	2				2				2				2				1				1				1								Total War Crew.				
VII.	Able Seaman	..	1	14	0	.. *in all Rates*																				1st Class				538				900				VII.
	Yeoman of Store-room	..																								2d Class				488				850	First Rates.			
	Ordinary Seaman	..																								3d Class				438				800				
																										1st Class				363				700				
																										2d Class				313				650	Second Rates.			
																										1st Class				357				650				
	Cook's Mate	..	1	6	0	.. *in all Rates*																				2d Class				307				600	Third Rates.			
	Barber																									1st Class				264				450				
	Purser's Steward in Vessels in which a Purser is allowed																									2d Class				164				350	Fourth Rates.			
	Captain's Steward	..	1	14	0	.. *in all Rates*																				1st Class				142				300	Fifth Rates.			
	Captain's Cook																									2d Class				122				280				
	Ward or Gun-room Steward																									1st Class				61				175				
	Ward or Gun-room Cook																									2d Class				31				145	Sixth Rates.			
	Steward's Mate																									3d Class				11				135				
	Landman	..	1	3	0	.. *in all Rates*																				1st Class				48				135				
																										2d Class				28				125				
																										3d Class				14				95	Sloops.			
																										4th Class				14				75				
																										Sloops				17				67	Bombs.			
																										Bombs				17				60				
																										Brigs, &c.				27				60	Brigs, &c.			
VIII.	Boy First Class	13	0	14	3	12	0	14	3	10	0	14	3	7	0	14	3	6	0	14	3	5	0	14	3	4	0	14	3	2	0	14	3	..				1	0	14	3	VIII.
	Boy Second Class	18	0	12	9	17	0	12	9	16	0	12	9	11	0	12	9	10	0	12	9	9	0	12	9	6	0	12	9	2	0	12	9	5	0	12	9	2	0	12	9	
	Total Number of Blue Jackets in each Ship	202				187				168				126				108				89				67				49				36				21				

ROYAL MARINES.*

II.	Captain	1	14	14	0	1	14	14	0	1	14	14	0	1	14	14	0	..				..				..				..				..	15	8	0					II.
	— if Brevet Major		17	10	0		17	10	0		17	10	0		17	10	0	..				..				..				..				..	18	4	0					
	First Lieutenant																																								
	— after 7 years	..	10	10	0	..	10	10	0	..	10	10	0	..	10	10	0	..	10	10	0	..	10	10	0	..				..				..	10	19	4					
	— under 7 years	3	9	2	0	3	9	2	0	2	9	2	0	1	9	2	0	2	9	2	0	1	9	2	0	..				1	9	11	4								
	Second Lieutenant	..	7	7	0	..	7	7	0	..	7	7	0	..	7	7	0	..	7	7	0	..	7	7	0	..				..				1	7	16	4					
IV.	Serjeant	4	2	0	1	3	2	0	1	3	2	0	1	2	2	0	1	2	2	0	1	1	2	0	1	1	2	0	1	1	2	0	1	1	2	12	8	1	2	0	1	IV.
	— if Colour Serjeant		2	14	1		2	14	1		2	14	1		2	14	1		2	14	1		2	14	1		2	14	1		2	14	1		3	6	8		2	14	1	
V.	Corporal	..	1	12	1	..	1	12	1	..	1	12	1	..	1	12	1	..	1	12	1	..	1	12	1	..	1	12	1	..	1	12	1	..	2	8	0	..	1	12	1	V.
	— after 14 years																																									
	— from 7 to 14 years, (if enlisted prior to 24 January, 1823)	4	1	9	9	3	1	9	9	3	1	9	9	2	1	9	9	1	1	9	9	1	1	9	9	1	1	9	9	1	1	9	9	1	2	5	8	1	1	9	9	
	— all others		1	7	5		1	7	5		1	7	5		1	7	5		1	7	5		1	7	5		1	7	5		1	7	5		2	3	4		1	7	5	
VII.	Drummer	2	1	3	4	2	1	3	4	2	1	3	4	1	1	3	4	1	1	3	4	1	1	3	4	1	1	3	4	..				..	1	5	8					VII.
	Bombardier																																									
	— after 14 years																																	..	2	4	0					
	— from 7 to 14 years, (if enlisted prior to 24 January, 1823)	..				..				..				..				..				..				..				..				1	2	1	8					
	— all others	..				..				..				..				..				..				..				..				..	1	19	4					
	Private or Gunner																																								
	— after 14 years	..	1	4	1	..	1	4	1	..	1	4	1	..	1	4	1	..	1	4	1	..	1	4	1	..	1	4	1	..	1	4	1	..	1	8	10	..	1	4	1	
	— from 7 to 14 years, (if enlisted prior to 24 January, 1823)	146	1	1	9	138	1	1	9	114	1	1	9	53	1	1	9	44	1	1	9	21	1	1	9	17	1	1	9	10	1	1	9	10	1	6	6	10	1	1	9	
	— all others		0	19	5		0	19	5		0	19	5		0	19	5		0	19	5		0	19	5		0	19	5		0	19	5		1	4	2		0	19	5	
	Total Number of Marines in each Ship	160				150				125				60				50				25				20				12				14				12				

* The Pay under the Head of Bombs is that of the Marine Artillery, and is what they are to receive when embarked in any Ship.—Time is always cast or counted by the lunar month of 28 days; so that there are 13 months and 1 day in the Marines' year, as well as in that of the Seamen. The Officers draw their Pay by 'Quarterly Bills' every 84 days.

ASSISTANT SURGEONS.	Per Day.
Three Years' Service	£0 3 0
Two Years	0 2 0
Dispensers	0 5 0
CHAPLAINS.	
After 8 Years' Service at Sea, or 10 in Harbour	0 5 0
For each Year's longer Service than 8 at Sea, or 10 in Harbour, 6d. per day addit. till it reach	0 10 0
PURSERS.	
To the first 100 on the List	0 6 0
To the next 200	0 5 0
The remainder	0 4 0
NAVAL INSTRUCTORS AND SCHOOLMASTERS.	
Two Years' Service (subsequent to regulations of 1st May, 1837)	0 2 0
Three Years' Service from that date	0 3 0

As soon as the ship's company have been mustered, the captain takes off his hat and reads the Articles of War, to which, out of respect to this important act of parliament, the people listen in like manner uncovered. As I shall have occasion at a future time to enter fully into an account of the original intention and spirit, as well as the present acceptation and practical operation of these Articles, I need say nothing of them now, except that almost every one of them assigns the punishment of death to the offence specified. Of course, this degree of severity is not observed in one case out of many thousands. But it is not difficult to show, at least in naval matters, the great utility, and eventual advantage to all the parties concerned, of possessing in the letter of the law the utmost stretch of power. Indeed, there are few things in the history of moral or judicial discipline more curious, or perhaps more instructive, than the modifications which all penal enactments must of necessity be made to undergo in practice.

On Sunday morning, between breakfast and divisions, some captains occupy themselves in examining the weekly reports of the expenditure of boatswain's, gunner's, and carpenter's stores; and in going over with the purser the account of the remains of provisions, fuel, and slop-clothing on board. After which he may overhaul the midshipmen's log-books, watch, station, and quarter bills, or take a look at their school-books. If the ship be in harbour, he also glances his eye at their accounts; and he generally takes occasion to indulge in a little kindly gossip about their mess, their love of the sea, and the last letters they received from home.

Thus the gallant skipper, as well as his gallant crew, has seldom much spare time on his hands during the forenoon of Sunday. I should be right glad, indeed, to be informed what day, or hour, or even what half-hour, in the whole week, from end to end, the captain can fairly call his own. Not one! Every other person on board has his hour, or his four hours, or his eight hours of rest, and of relief from all anxiety; but the poor captain has not a minute. He is the chief over all, it is true; but he pays dearly and deeply for this distinction in the shape of heavy responsibilities, and perpetual trials of various kinds. Our poet says, "uneasy lies the head that wears a crown"—I am quite sure that unburdened never lie the shoulders that wear two epaulettes. The captain is at all calls, and must be ready at all seasons with resources, good or bad, to supply the failures or indolence of others; while his own fate, fortunes, and character, as well as the credit of the service, and sometimes that of the country, are made to hang upon the instantaneous nature of his decisions, and upon the vigour and efficiency of his exertions, at moments perhaps when his powers are nearly exhausted, and his spirit all but crushed by sheer fatigue. The simple enumeration of a captain of a man-of-war's ordinary responsibilities, I have often thought, would win for his class a degree of considerate forbearance, and candid allowance for his difficulties, which, perhaps, it has never yet fairly received from the public. If, to such enumeration, a notice respecting the duties of each were appended, an interesting peep might be afforded to the curious of the internal government of our singular community, and information supplied on not a few points, respecting which most people are entirely ignorant.

It is frequently the practice in the navy on Sundays to muster clothes at divisions, and to take a list of what slops are required by the men to complete their kit, or stock of worldly goods. This overhaul or inspection happens once a month; and when such is the intention, the word is passed along the lower deck at breakfast-time, that the ship's company are to 'muster clothes at divisions.' When the drum beats, each man brings his bag to the place where he stands in his division, and proceeds to arrange his things in order on the deck before him, each article being placed separately, that the officer may count, and, if he pleases, examine them, after the mates and mids have first called over the names, to ascertain that every man has the proper complement of articles, in good order, and well washed. A note is then taken of what things are wanted, in the way of slops, to supply worn-out and condemned clothes. 'Slops' is the technical name for jackets, trousers, shirts, and other articles of a sailor's wardrobe, before they have been used. They are sent on board in bales and boxes by government, and placed in charge of the purser.

All this is reported in detail to the lieutenant of the division, who continues walking backwards and forwards while the inspection is going on, ready to answer appeals in the event of any difficulties or doubts arising. He carries in his hand a complete list of his division, and of each man's clothes; and when the young gentlemen under his orders have finished their work, and taken down what is wanted, the lieutenant goes along the line to investigate the whole anew. He then collects the different memorandums of slops wanted, and proceeds to make his report to the captain, who either sanctions or disapproves of the decision of the officer, as he pleases. Frequently the captain himself goes along the divisions, to look at the men's clothing; but the glance which he takes is necessarily of a more cursory nature; his object is, to let the men feel that he is ready to interfere, if need be, but also to show, that unless there is any special call for the interposition of his authority, he confides in those under him. And it may be observed, as a general principle, that there is nothing more absurd in itself, or in its effects more mischievous to the cause of good discipline, than the silly propensity some officers

have to show distrust of their inferiors in rank, even on occasions when, in point of fact, they have confidence in them. This can arise only from a petty feeling of jealousy, as if the captain was afraid honestly to repose in the skill and discretion of his officers, lest it should be imagined by the men that he himself was ignorant of his duty. In this spirit I have not infrequently seen captains interfere quite wantonly, and actually put things wrong which they knew to be right, for no purpose but to establish their independence in a case where their authority was unquestionable, and where their knowledge was never called in question, up to these moments when their own perversity of temper chose to cast a doubt over it. A commander should recollect, that whether it be he himself, or chiefly his officers and crew, who perform any useful public service, he invariably reaps at least his full share of the credit. His real interest, therefore, must always be, not merely to draw about him the ablest men he can induce to follow him, but to allow them the utmost latitude of independent action and responsibility, and as much of the merit of success as possible. If he persevere sincerely in this course, he will soon discover, that, by a very curious principle in our nature, the more he endeavours to remove the credit from himself, or, rather, to divide it handsomely along with those who are acting with him, the more will he generally find the merit given back to himself.

The converse, it is hardly less useful to observe, holds with singular force, and even more immediate effect; for whenever a person in authority wishes to monopolise all the credit of what has been done, even though he may be fairly entitled to a large portion of it, the claim is exceedingly apt to be disallowed altogether.

In short, this matter of allotting credit, whenever it is viewed in any way but one, is perplexed beyond extrication; and many a wretched commanding officer have I seen floundering and torturing himself, and all hands besides, in the vain search for a little trashy grain or two of popularity: all which, and much more, would have been freely awarded him, and in twenty times the measure, had he only let things alone, and been more truly disinterested.

I suspect few people have the smallest notion of what a sailor's wardrobe consists. Every one has, indeed, a vague idea that he must have a blue jacket and trousers, and a low, canvas, shining sort of affair, stuck on one side of his head, and called by him a hat. But of any further particulars, the shore-going world really knows about as little as they do respecting the dresses of the Emperor of China. Honest Jack, it is very true, is not much encumbered with clothes; and too often his wardrobe sadly resembles that of the Honourable Mr. Dowlas, which was so easily transportable in the Honourable Mr. Dowlas's pocket handkerchief. Yet if he have the opportunity, poor fellow, and be duly encouraged, he is not a little of a dandy in his way.

In a well-regulated ship, a sailor's kit consists generally of at least two blue jackets, and one pea jacket, which is a sort of lumbering shaggy surtout, or curtailed great-coat, capable of being wrapped round the body, so as to cover the thighs. Why it is called a pea jacket, I should be glad to be informed by any knowing person; and I beg leave accordingly to refer the question to that corner of the United Service Journal reserved for technical queries, a valuable niche in that ably conducted periodical. A seaman must also have two pair of blue trousers, two pair of shoes, six shirts, four pair of stockings, two Guernsey frocks, made of a sort of worsted stocking-work, without any opening in front; two hats, two black handkerchiefs, and a comforter to wrap round the throat; together with several pair of flannel drawers and waistcoats; for in hot, as well as in cold climates, and at all times of the year, the men are now encouraged, as much as possible, to wear flannel next the skin.

The above forms the kit of a sailor in a ship stationed in high latitudes. On the Mediterranean station, or on that of North America, there is such a mixture of severe and mild weather, that a larger stock is necessary than when the ship is employed exclusively in a cold, or in a hot climate. On the Indian, South American, and West Indian stations, which lie almost entirely between the tropics, woollen clothing gradually disappears, and the men are apt to suffer a good deal on returning to colder regions; it being hardly to be expected that folks of such improvident habits as sailors will be able to take care of articles of dress, for several years together, for which they have no immediate use.

I remember a captain, whose ship had been often exposed to these alternations, amusing his people very much on entering the tropics, by directing them to roll up all their blue clothes, worsted stockings, and so on, in neat bundles, each having the name and number of the person it belonged to written on a wooden tally, and fastened to it. These being all collected, and packed carefully in well-dried, water-tight casks, were stowed away in the hold, and forgotten, till the pinching blasts off Cape Horn made the unpacking of the casks a scene of as great joy as ever attended the opening of a box of finery from Madame Carson's, at a boarding-school gala.

In warm climates, the stock of a man-of-war sailor consists of four duck frocks, which are more like shirts than any thing else, with sundry strings, and touches of blue binding about the breast and collar, which is generally lined with blue, and allowed to fall over the shoulders. It is totally contrary to Jack's habits to have anything tight about his throat; and one of the chief causes of his invincible estrangement from the royal marine corps is their stiff-necked custom of wearing polished leather stocks. I hardly suppose there could be found any motive strong enough to induce a genuine sailor to buckle a permanent collar round his neck with any tolerable grace; the alternative of the yard-rope would almost be preferable! His delight is to place a black or coloured silk handkerchief lightly over his neck, and to confine its ends across his breast by means of one of the small bones or vertebræ of a shark, which forms a neat, white, perforated cylinder. Some very prime dandies of the mizen-top fold a part of their handkerchief over the shoulders and back; but it requires the aid of a handsome person, and a good deal of modest assurance, to make this tolerable.

They must also provide themselves with four

pair of duck trousers, a straw hat for fine weather, and a canvas or beaver one for squalls, though this need not be insisted on. Shoes are not much used, except by those whose work lies aloft; and prudent hands generally keep a blue jacket by them, in case of rain or night-work. It is not a bad rule to muster the crew occasionally with blue jackets, even in hot weather, to see that such things are really in existence. Each man has, of course, a bed, a pillow, and two blankets; sheets are never heard of. He has also two hammocks, one of which is slung and in use, the other scrubbed, dry, and stowed away, ready to be exchanged for the dirty one. The hammocks, at the time I first went to sea (1802), were made of a coarse brown stuff, which it was difficult, if not impossible, to make white by any amount of scrubbing; and, what was worse, so thick that it was by no means easily dried. Now-a-days, they are generally made either of canvas, or of a twilled sacking, and, when spread out, measure 4½ feet by 3½; but when lashed up, and ready for stowing away in the netting, they form long sacks, about as big as a man's body, but not tapering to the ends.

In ships where much pains is taken to have the hammocks stowed properly, they are lashed up, so as to preserve the same width all along, and with neither more nor fewer than seven turns with a well-blacked small lashing, carefully passed round at equal intervals. When the hammocks are prepared in this way, and all made of the same size, (which condition may be secured by putting them through a ring of given dimensions,) they are laid in symmetrical order all round the ship, above the bulwark, on the quarter-deck and forecastle, and in the waist nettings along the gangways. Each hammock, it may be mentioned, has a separate number painted neatly upon it on a small, white, oval patch, near one of the corners; so that, when they are all stowed in the nettings, a uniform line of numbers extends round the ship, and the hammock of any man who may be taken ill can be found by his messmates in a moment. The bags, in like manner, of which each person has two, are numbered separately. In rainy weather the hammocks are securely covered by painted cloths.

As a seaman's kit generally forms his whole property, it ought to be carefully preserved, and every possible facility given that the service will allow of for his keeping it in good order. A captain of any consideration will naturally bear in mind, that as the comfort and health of the men under his command depend most materially upon the manner in which they are clad, and especially upon the damp or dry state of their dress, it becomes an important branch of his duty to see that their things are taken care of with as much exactness as the spare sails, cordage, or provisions. It much too frequently happens, however, that the unfortunate sailors' clothes are more torment to them than advantage, and they may think themselves lucky if they can catch hold of a jacket or trousers to shift withal, so eternally are they interfered with by some inconsiderate officers. "Pipe the bags up!" "Pipe the bags down!" "Stow the bags afresh!" "Pipe to scrub the bags!" and twenty such orders are given in a day in some ships, to the endless misery of the people. It is, no doubt, necessary that the bags should be scrubbed and stowed properly, and be piped up and down at the proper times and seasons. But there are two ways of doing these things: one, which gives the men no more trouble than is absolutely unavoidable; the other, which harasses and justly provokes them. It is not enough to say that they must submit, whether they like it or not. They will submit, it is true; but in what temper? and how will these men work when called upon to exert themselves, if they are habitually treated with disrespect, and exposed to needless, and what I really must be allowed to call impertinent worry? I have even heard of some crack ships, as they are termed, where the poor devils were obliged to pipe-clay their bags, to make them look white, forsooth! Why, the very idea of pipe-clay (though dear to the soul of a royal and loyal marine) is gall and wormwood to the taste of the Johnnies. Of late years I understand there have been introduced black painted water-proof bags, which are a great comfort to the men. Besides keeping out wet, they require no trouble to scrub and dry, and, after all, are fully as clean, and far more useful in every respect.

On occasions of such absurd ultra discipline as that just alluded to, when no man could rest for a moment, or get at his bag to take out a jacket that wanted mending, or a stocking to darn, the fellows used sometimes to give it up in despair, keep their clothes in their hammocks, and, in order to deceive the hawk's eye of the first lieutenant, would stuff their quintuply cursed bags with shavings and shakings, and stow them in uninterrupted peace in the nettings, or wherever else it pleased the caprice of the premier to have them piled.

Upon all these proceedings I have only one remark to make, which, I am sure, will be considered reasonable by every officer who has sincerely at heart the good of the service, as the ultimate aim of all his exertions on board. The less the men are tormented the better: and although it be essential to their health and strength that their clothing should be kept in good order, and the stock maintained at a certain quantity; yet great pains, I think, ought to be taken to accomplish these purposes at the least cost of interference with what may be termed the domestic habits of the sailors. Heaven knows, they have few enough comforts which, by any effect of ingenuity in the use of language, can be called domestic; but such as they have ought to be respected, or in some sense guaranteed to them. The strait-laced habits of our discipline forbid any rights or privileges, properly so called, to be claimed by the men; and there can be no question that this, in the long-run, is equally to their own advantage and to the good of the service, as it is to the convenience of the officers. Still, there are many points of indulgence which a right-minded captain will permanently grant to his people, but without binding himself not to interfere with, or change his plans, if he find them not to answer, or if he suspect that improper advantage is taken of the relaxation allowed.

So many circumstances occur to distinguish one ship from another, that it is not easy to lay down general rules for their internal arrangement in these matters. What may be judicious in war may be hurtful in peace; what might be irksome in the highest degree on a solitary passage to

India, may become absolutely necessary in a fleet, or on board ships cruising together. A perfectly new ship's company, suddenly collected from all the winds of heaven, some of them with a capital stock of clothes, others with scarcely a rag to shake in the breeze, will require a very different style of management for the first six or eight months, in the matter of their wardrobes, from what may gradually have become necessary with a crew, the members of which have been acting together for three or four years, and who have fallen into regular habits.

To show the various sorts of outfit which the men composing a man-of-war's crew may be furnished with on first coming on board, I shall describe a scene which took place on the Leander's quarter-deck, off the port of New York, in 1804. We were rather short-handed in those days; and being in the presence of a blockaded enemy, and liable, at half an hour's warning, to be in action, we could not afford to be very scrupulous as to the ways and means by which our numbers were completed, so that able-bodied men were secured to handle the gun-tackle falls. It chanced one day that we fell in with a ship filled with emigrants; a description of vessel called, in the classical dictionary of the cockpit, an 'Irish guinea man.' Out of her we pressed twenty Irishmen, besides two strapping fellows from Yorkshire, and one canny Scot.

Each of this score of Pats was rigged merely in a great-coat, and a pair of something which might be called an apology for inexpressibles; while the rest of their united wardrobe could have been stowed away in the crown of any one of their hats. Their motives for emigrating to a country where mere health and strength of body are sure to gain an independent provision, were obvious enough; and I must say, that to this hour I have not been able to forget the melancholy cry or howl with which the separation of these hardy settlers from their families was effected by the strong arm of power. It was a case of necessity, it is true; but still it was a cruel case, and one for the exercise of which the officer who put it in force deserves almost as much pity as the poor wretches whose feelings and interests it became his bounden duty to disregard.

In most admired contrast to this bewildered drove of half-starved Paddies stood the two immense, broad-shouldered, high-fed Yorkshiremen, dressed in long-tailed coats, corduroy breeches, and yellow-topped boots, each accompanied by a chest of clothes not much less than a piano-forte, and a huge pile of spades, pick-axes, and other implements of husbandry. They possessed money also, and letters of credit, and described themselves as being persons of some substance at home. Why they emigrated they would not tell; but such were their prospects, that it was difficult to say whether they or the wild Irishers were the most to be commiserated for so untoward an interruption. Be this as it may, it cost the clerk half an hour to write down a list of their multifarious goods and chattels, while a single scratch of the pen sufficed for that of all the Irishmen.

At last honest Saunders came under review. He was a tall, raw-boned, grave-looking personage, much pitted with the smallpox, and wearing a good deal of that harassed and melancholy air, which, sooner or later, settles on the brow of an assistant to a village pedagogue. He was startled, but not abashed, when drawn to the middle of the deck, and asked, in the presence of fifty persons, what clothes and other things he possessed? Not choosing at first to betray his poverty, he made no answer, but looked round, as if to discover where his chest had been placed. He then glanced at his thread-bare sleeve and tattered shoon, with a slight touch of dry and bitter humour playing about the corners of his mouth, and a faint sparkle lighting up his grey and sunken eye, as he returned the impatient official stare of the clerk, who stood, pen in hand, ready to note down the items.

"Don't be frightened, man," said the captain; "no one is going to hurt you, your things are quite safe. What does your property consist of?"

"A trifle, sir, a trifle," quoth poor Sawney; "fourpence ha'penny and an auld knife!"

Before concluding this subject, it may perhaps be useful to remark, that, unless in those cases where such a measure is absolutely necessary (and I admit there are some), the actual examination and minute recording of the men's clothes might, in general, be advantageously dispensed with. Let any gentleman ask himself how he would like to have his drawers, boxes, and writing desks, rummaged once a month, and a list taken of all his odds and ends? The cases are not strictly parallel, to be sure; still, we must allow some human feelings to old Jack, who, with all the roughness of his exterior, is acutely sensible to kindness. At all events, I never could persuade myself that there was not more harm than good done by the act of tumbling out, and taking a detailed list of every shirt, trousers, and pair of shoes. These clothes' musterings often looked to me like a sort of inquisitorial spying and prying into matters with which, although we certainly have some concern, we have not quite so much as we now and then are apt to take upon us. I have, indeed, occasionally fancied I saw traces of irritation and wounded pride amongst the men, when all their little knic-knacs, every hat, hose, and handkerchief, or old shoe, was examined into and noted down, to be reproduced that day month, or its absence accounted for.

I tried a middle sort of course in my own ship, which appeared to answer all the purposes required. From time to time the men were ordered to bring their bags to divisions, and to spread out their clothes to air on the deck, over the guns, along the hammock-nettings, or in the rigging. In this way the officers and mids, who passed repeatedly up and down the line, had opportunities enough, if they did their duty, to see that all the clothes were clean, dry, and in good order. When any man's things were observed not to be in the condition demanded by the regulations of the ship, or he was found ragged in his clothes, or not properly dressed, then such delinquent was no longer indulged with the exemption, but had his kit subjected to a daily, or weekly, or monthly scrutiny, as the case might be. As long as he was in this predicament, he was obliged to exhibit every article in proper condition, and was not at liberty, without asking leave, to destroy even such worn-out things as an old Jew clothesman would turn up his beard at. I took care that no part of this surveillance should be talked of as a punish-

ment, although, unquestionably, it was intended and felt as such; but studied rather to give it the character of a necessary duty in the instance of individuals who, if not so watched, would, by their misconduct, hurt the general discipline of the ship. It was very seldom that any one exposed to such drilling for a month or six weeks ever brought himself within the range of its humiliation a second time.

Although it is going a little out of the way, I may remark, that in these, and indeed in all other cases, it is never wise to convert any necessary task into a punishment; for no duty, however disagreeable, should be rendered disgraceful; because the time may come when the work in question must be done, though there may happen to be no offender ready to employ upon it. We must then either cast about to discover faults to fit the duty required, which is always a very bad practice; or if we do not adopt this unworthy line, we must call upon good men to turn their hands to duties rendered despicable by having been previously allotted as appropriate tasks to culprits.

In concluding these remarks on a department of the service which is hardly dreamed of by shore-going folks, it may be observed, that in mustering clothes, stowing hammocks, cleaning decks, and in sundry other internal operations, although the attention of a thorough-bred, right-headed, and right-hearted officer, ought to be directed to the most complete accomplishment of purposes which the usage of the service requires; yet, in the execution of these objects, he should never cease to recollect, that the less he worries the men, and the less trouble he gives them beyond what experience has shown to be absolutely inevitable, the better will the work be done. He will also find, that when he acts on such considerate principles, the happier and more contented his people will become, and the more certainly he may reckon upon their future exertions on those momentous and trying occasions which fall beyond the limits of mere routine; such as actions, shipwrecks, and long-continued privations; when the hearty co-operation of the ship's company and officers becomes indispensable to success, perhaps to the very existence of the ship, and all hands on board of her.

CHAPTER XIV.

SAILORS' PETS.

A DOG is the most obvious and natural pet for a gentleman; but still, a dog, with all his familiarity, is a selfish sort of companion, for he generally bestows his whole sociability either upon his master, or his master's servant who feeds him, or upon his master's friend who accompanies him to the fields. To all others he is not only cold, but often surly and impertinent. This, indeed, would matter little, if there were not unfortunately a proverb extant, which has led perhaps to more squabbles, duels, and other uncharitableness, than most other causes of dispute. This pugnacious proverb, "Love me, love my dog," being interpreted, signifies, "If you kick my dog, I kick you." Then follows, if not the kick, words which hurt honour quite as much, and in the end too often draw away the life-blood of warriors who, but for some mangy cur, might have fought themselves into companionship in public usefulness and fame with 'Duncan, Howe, or Jarvis.'

No dog, therefore, can ever become a very general favourite of the crew; for it is so completely his nature to be exclusive in his regards, that were a whole pack of hounds on board, they would not be enough, nor afford a tenth part of the amusement—I may almost call it occupation, which a single monkey serves out to a ship's company. I take good care, accordingly, never to be without one in any ship I command, on the sheer principle of keeping the men employed, in a good-humoured way, when they chance to have no specific duty to attend to. It must be recollected, that we are often exposed to long periods of inaction, during which mischief is very apt to be brewed amongst the people.

But if a good monkey be allowed to run about the ship, I defy any one to continue long in a bad humour. Jacko is an overmatch for the demon of idleness, at least if light hearts and innocent diversions be weapons against which he cannot long contend. Be this as it may, I make a rule of entering a monkey as speedily as possible after hoisting my pendant; and if a reform takes place in the table of ratings, I would recommend a corner for the 'ship's monkey,' which should be borne on the books for 'full allowance of victuals,' excepting only the grog; for I have observed that a small quantity of tipple very soon upsets him; and although there are few things in nature more ridiculous than a monkey half-seas over, yet the reasons against permitting such pranks are obvious and numerous.

It requires some decision on the part of the captain to carry through a point of this importance, and fairly to establish Jacko on board. The first lieutenant, who is, or ought to be, a sort of demi-god afloat, generally sets his face against all pets, and swears vengeance upon the whole tribe of parrots, squirrels, rabbits, pigeons, mongooses, dogs, monkeys, cats, and, I am ashamed to say, he occasionally extends his anathemas even to lady passengers! Supposing, however, that the captain has authority and strength of mind enough to establish a monkey on board, the rogue will not have been ten minutes 'entered' before he sets to work at some mischief; for he is the only true known instance of perpetual motion.

When Lord Melville, then First Lord of the Admiralty, to my great surprise and delight, put into my hands a commission for a ship going to the South American station, a quarter of the world I had long desired to visit, my first thought was, "Where now shall I manage to find a merry rascal of a monkey?" Of course, I did not give audible expression to this thought in the First Lord's room; but, on coming down stairs, had a talk about it in the hall with my friend, the late Mr. Nutland, the porter, who laughed, and said,

"Why, sir, you may buy a wilderness of monkeys at Exeter 'Change."

"True! true!" and off I hurried in a cab, or more probably in a chariot, for this was some years before the glorious era of cabs. Mr. Cross not only agreed to spare me one of his choicest and funniest animals, but readily offered his help

to convey him to the ship, and thus removed a difficulty which had troubled me not a little as I rattled along the Strand. The idea of taking a monkey in a postchaise, even had I been travelling in that magnificent style, was not very agreeable; and it was quite clear, that either as an outside or an inside passenger in a stage-coach, the tricks of master Jacko would soon have got himself and his owner into a scrape with the other passengers. I mentioned my dilemma to Mr. Cross.

"Lord, sir!" said he, "there is not an animal in the whole world so wild or fierce that we can't carry about as innocent as a lamb; only trust to me, sir, and your monkey shall be delivered on board your ship in Portsmouth Harbour as safely as if he were your best chronometer going down by mail in charge of the master."

I had some curiosity to see how this purpose was to be accomplished, and returned again some days afterwards to be present at the ceremony of removal. My chattering purchase was thrust, not without many violent struggles and horrible grins, fairly into a deal box, and nailed down. A number of holes had been bored in the top and sides, not large enough for our gentleman to poke his paw through, but sufficient to furnish him with air, and enable him to discover what was going on in the external world. In this predicament he looked about as miserable as possible, even at home amongst his kith and kindred of the ancient menagerie at Exeter 'Change, now, alas! demolished. When his box or cage was hoisted on the top of the Rocket, that fastest and safest of stage-coaches, poor St. Jago, as the sailors called him afterwards, was in such an agony of terror that I half repented of my cruelty in forcing him to emigrate.

Off he went, however, for the coast; and being left without provisions or water except a few nuts, he was in a famous condition for his breakfast next morning, when the waterman ferried him off from Common Hard to the hulk, on board which the officers had just assembled. As the ship had been only two or three days in commission, few seamen had as yet entered; but shortly afterwards they came on board in sufficient numbers; and I have sometimes ascribed the facility with which we got the ship manned, not a little to the attractive agency of the diverting vagabond, recently come from town, the fame of whose tricks soon extended over Portsea. He certainly was the most amusing fellow on board, but also the most mischievous; and, I fairly grant, as such he became at times a real nuisance.

I need not dwell on the common-place tricks of a nautical monkey, as they must be well known to every one; such as catching hold of the end of the sail-maker's ball of twine, and paying the whole overboard, hand over hand, from a secure station in the rigging; or his stealing the boatswain's silver call, and letting it drop from the end of the cat-head; or his getting into one of the cabin ports and tearing up the captain's letters, a trick at which even the stately skipper is obliged to laugh.

One of our monkey's grand amusements was to watch some one arranging his clothes in his bag. After the stowage was completed, and everything put carefully away, he would steal round, untie the strings, and having opened the mouth of the bag draw forth in succession every article of dress, first smell to it, then turn it over and over, and lastly fling it away on the wet deck. It was amusing enough to observe, that all the while he was committing any piece of mischief, he appeared not only to be under the fullest consciousness of guilt, but living in the perfect certainty that he was earning a good sound drubbing for his pains. Still, the pleasure of doing wrong was so strong and habitual within him, that he seemed utterly incapable of resisting the temptation whenever it fell in his way. While occupied in these misdeeds, he continued alternately chattering with terror, and screaming with delight at his own ingenuity, till the enraged owner of the property burst in upon him, hardly more angry with Jacko than with his malicious messmates, who, instead of preventing, rather encouraged the pillage.

All this was innocent, however, compared to the tricks which the blue jackets taught him to play upon the jolly marines. How they set about this laudable piece of instruction, I know not; but the antipathy which they established in Jacko's breast against the red coats was something far beyond ordinary prejudice, and in its consequences, partook more of the interminable war between cat and dog.

The monkey, who entered with all the zeal of a hot partisan into the designs of the blues, showed no mercy to the red faction, against whom he had not, in fact, the slightest shadow of a real quarrel. That trifling circumstance, however, seemed, as in graver cases of dispute, only to aggravate the hostility, and every new day brought a new mode of attack upon the unhappy soldiers, who were never safe. At first he merely chattered, or grinned contemptuously at them; or, at worst, snapped at their heels, soiled their fine pipe-clayed trousers, or pulled the cartridges out of their cartouch-boxes, and scattered the powder over the decks; feats for which his rump was sure to smart under the ratan of the indignant sergeant, to whom the 'party' made their complaint. Upon these occasions the sailors laughed so heartily at their friend Jacko, as he placed his hands behind him, and, in an agony of rage and pain, rubbed the seat of honour tingling under the sergeant's chastisement, that if he could only have reasoned the matter like a statesman, he would soon have distrusted his advantage in this offensive but not defensive alliance with the Johnnies against the Jollies. Sometimes, indeed, he appeared to be quite sensible of his absurd position, caned by his enemy, and ridiculed by his friends, in whose cause he was suffering. On these occasions, he often made a run, open-mouthed at the sailors; in return for which mutinous proceeding, he was sure to get a smart rap over the nose from his own party, which more than counterpoised the anguish at the other extremity of his person, giving ludicrous occupation to both his hands, and redoubling the shouts of laughter at his expense. In short, poor St. Jago literally got what is currently called monkey's allowance, viz. 'more kicks than halfpence.'

In process of time, as Mr. Monkey, by dint of that bitter monitor, experience, gained higher knowledge in the art of marine warfare and ship diplomacy, he became much more formidable in his attacks on the 'corps,' and generally contrived to keep himself well beyond the reach of the ser-

geant's merciless ratan. One of the favourite pranks of the sailors was to place him near the break of the forecastle, with a handspike, taken from the bow-chaser gun, in his paws. It was quite as much as he could carry, and far more than he could use as a missile against the royals; but he was soon instructed in a method of employing it, which always grievously annoyed the enemy. Theoretically speaking, I presume poor Jacko knew no more of the laws of gravitation, when applying it to the annoyance of the marines, than his friends, the seamen, did of centrifugal action, when swinging round the hand-lead to gain soundings, by pitching it far forward into the water; but without such scientific knowledge, both the monkey and his wicked associates knew very well, that if a handspike were held across the top of the forecastle ladder, and let go when a person was about half-way down it, the heels of the said individual would be sure to bring up, or stop the bar. The unhappy marine, therefore, who happened to be descending the steps when Jacko let his handspike fall, generally got the skin taken off his heels, or his instep, according as his rear or his front was turned towards the foe. The instant Jacko let go his hold, and the law of gravitation began to act, so that the handspike was heard to rattle down the ladder, off he jumped to the bow of the barge, overlooking the spot, and there sat, with his neck stretched out, his eyes starting from his head, and his lips drawn back, till his teeth, displayed from ear to ear, rapped against one another like a pair of castanets in a bolero, under the influence of the most ecstatic alarm, curiously mixed up with the joy of complete success. The poor wounded Gulpin, in the mean time, rubbed his ankles as he fired off a volley of imprecations, the only effect of which was to increase the number of his audience, grinning and laughing in chorus with the terrified mischief-monger.

I remember seeing a marine, of more than usual activity, and who had before been served this trick, catch hold of the end of the weather middle stay-sail sheet, hanging from the booms, and, before Jacko knew what he was about, succeed in giving him such a cut across his sconce as the animal never forgot or forgave. Next morning the monkey stowed himself away behind the pumps, till the same marine passed; he then sprung out, and laid hold of him by the calf of the leg; and, in spite of sundry kicks and cuffs, never once relaxed his jaws till the teeth met amongst what the lob-lolly boy, in the pride of his anatomical knowledge, called the 'gastrocnemii muscles' of his enemy's leg. The cries of 'murder!' from the soldier, brought the marines, and many of the sailors, under the half-deck to the poor fellow's rescue; while the author of the mischief scuttled off among the men's feet, chattering and screaming all the way. He was not again seen during two or three days; at the end of which, as the wounded 'troop' was not much hurt, a sort of truce was proclaimed between the red and the blue factions of the ship. Doubtless the armistice was all the better kept in consequence of some tolerably intelligible hints from the higher powers, that the peace of the ship was no longer to be invaded to make sport for those who were evidently more idle than they ought to be, and for whom, therefore, a little additional work might possibly be found.

Old Jacko, however, like one of the weaker states of Europe, whose fate and fortunes are settled by the protocols of the surrounding political giants, was no party to these treaties; and having once tasted the joys of revenge, he could not keep his teeth quiet, but must needs have another bite. Upon this occasion, however, he kept clear of the corps, and attacked one of his oldest and dearest friends, no less a personage than the captain of the foretop. It was in warm weather, and the men, as usual, were dining on the main-deck; the grog had been served out, and the happy Johnnies were just beginning to sip their darling beverage, when Mr. Mischief, incessantly occupied in his vocation of doing wrong, and utterly incapable of resisting any good opening to get himself into a scrape, saw the grog-kid of the captain of the top's mess standing by the fore-hatchway. So he paced round, as if seeking for a bit of bread, but all the while keeping his face turned just so far from the fated grog-vessel, that no one suspected his design. On reaching the spot his heart began to fail him, but not his wickedness; indeed, his was the very beau ideal of that character described in the satire of Junius, which, "without courage enough to resist doing a bad action, has yet virtue enough to be ashamed of it." Whether or not these mixed motives influenced old Jacko, I cannot pretend to say; but there he sat, chattering, screaming, and trembling, as if the sergeant's cane had been within an inch of his hide.

"What ails you, my dear Mr. St. James?" said the captain of the top, playfully addressing the monkey. "What are you afraid of? Nobody is going to hurt you; we are all sailors and friends here, man. Not a royal marine is within hail of you!"

At this stage of the colloquy the sly rogue having mustered all his energies, fairly grasped the grog-kid in his arms, and, making a clean spring from the deck, placed himself, at the first bound, beyond the reach of the horror-stricken seaman. This exploit was not so adroitly performed as it might have been if Jacko had been less agitated, and one half of the delicious nectar in the sailor's cup was jerked out.

"You bloody thundering rascal of a monkey!" bellowed the astounded topman; "let go the kid, or I'll shy this knife at your head!"

The threat was no sooner uttered than executed; for the sailor, without waiting to see the effect of his summons, threw the knife; and had not his saintship ducked his head, there would have been an end of monkey tricks for that cruise. As the glittering steel passed before the wicked scamp's eyes, the flash deprived him of all recollection of the mischief in hand: with a loud yell, he leaped on the booms, and in his terror let the prize slip from his grasp. It fell on the coaming of the hatchway, hung for one instant, and then dashed right down into the fore-cockpit, to the infinite astonishment of the boatswain's yeoman, a thirsty soul, and familiar with drink in all its shapes, but who declared he never before had tried grog in a shower-bath.

Up started the enraged party of seamen on their feet. "All hands catch monkey!" was the cry; and in ten seconds the whole crew, including the

cook with his ladle, and his mate with the Tormentors in his hand, were seen scrambling on deck. Jacko scampered like lightning up the main-stay, and reached the top before any of the men, who had mounted the rigging, were half-a-dozen ratlines above the hammocks. The officers rushed to the quarter-deck, naturally fancying from the bustling sounds that a man was overboard; but they were soon undeceived by the shouts of laughter which resounded from every part of the ship, low and aloft.

For a few moments Jacko sat on the main-cap, chattering at such a rate that, had it been dark, one of the men said, you could have seen the sparks of fire from his teeth. I do not quite believe this; but certainly I never witnessed such an expression of fear. A dozen men were soon pouring into the top, while two others were stealing up the stay, and four or five had got into the topmast-shrouds, to cut off his retreat in that direction; finally, an active fellow leaped from the rigging to the topmast, and sliding down the well-greased spar, almost plumped on the devoted head of this master of the revels. It was now absolutely necessary for Jacko to do something; so he made a clear run down the main lift to the lower yard-arm. The gunner's mate foreseeing this manœuvre, had sprung to guard his department, and had already lain out as far as the inner boom iron, with a gasket in his hand, and quite certain of catching the chase. Not a bit! "A gunner's mate catch a monkey!" The fable of the Tortoise and the Hare affords but a feeble simile to characterise such a match; and before old Hard-a-weather and his gasket had reached the yard-arm, our nimble Mona had trotted half way up the leach of the topsail, and was seated as familiarly on the bridle of the maintop-bowline, as if he had been perched on the feathery branch of a cocoa-nut tree, enjoying the sea breeze, in his native island, amongst the beautiful Cape de Verdes.

The sailors were now fairly baffled, and still more so when the expert rogue chose to climb a little higher, and then to walk deliberately along the standing part of the main-topsail brace to the mizen-topmast head; whence, as if to divert himself, or force his pursuers to mingle admiration with their rage, he made a flying leap downwards to the peak haulyards, scampering along the single part till he reached the end of the gaff. There he sat laughing at a hundred and fifty men and boys, employed in the vain attempt to catch one monkey!

Sailors are certainly not men to give up a pursuit lightly; but after an hour of as hard labour as I ever witnessed, they were all obliged to relinquish the chase from sheer fatigue, and poor Jacko was pardoned by acclamation. The captain of the foretop, however, a couple of days afterwards, more out of fun than from any ill-will on the old grog score, gave the monkey's ear a pinch, upon which the animal snapped at his thumb, and bit it so seriously that the man was obliged to apply to the doctor. When this was reported to me by the surgeon, I began to think my four-footed friend was either getting rather too much license, or that too many liberties were taken with him, so I gave orders that in future he should be let alone. Nevertheless, Jacko contrived to bite two more of the people, one of whom was the sergeant, the other the midshipmen's boy. These were all wounded in one day; and when the surgeon came to me next morning, as usual, with the sick-list in his hand, he was rather in dudgeon.

"Really, sir," said he, "this does seem rather too much of the monkey. Here are no fewer than three persons in my list from bites of this infernal beast."

"Three!" I exclaimed, and straightway got angry, partly at my own folly, partly at the perversity of my pet, and also somewhat nettled by the tone not very unreasonably assumed by the doctor. "Send Black, the quarter-master, here directly." He soon came.

"Don't you take care of the monkey?" I asked.

"Yes, sir, I do. You gave me charge of him."

"Well! and why don't you prevent his biting the people?"

"I can't prevent him, sir."

"No! Then throw him overboard!" I cried—"over with him at once! There he stands, in charge of the corporal and two marines; pitch him right over the lee gangway. I will not have the ship's company killed and wounded at this rate. Over with him I say!"

The quarter-master moved off to the lee gangway, and took the terrified animal in his arms; while, on its part, the poor creature seemed conscious of its approaching fate, and spread out its arms over the seaman's bare breast, as if to supplicate his mercy. The old sailor, who looked mightily as if he were going to melt upon the occasion, cast a petitioning glance to windward every now and then from under the edge of his straw hat, as I paced up and down the deck, still fuming away at the doctor's demi-official reproach. As I saw the fellow wished to say something, I at length asked him whether he had any proposal to make respecting his wicked and troublesome pet. The old man's face brightened up with this prospect of a respite for his favourite; and, after humming and hawing for a minute, he said,

"It is all owing to these two great teeth, sir; if they were out, he would be as harmless as any lamb."

"I tell you what it is," I replied, catching at this suggestion, "I positively will not have the whole ship's company driven one after another into the sick-list by your confounded monkey; but if you choose to draw those wild-boar tusks of his, you may let him live."

Few reprieves were ever hailed at the foot of the gallows with more joy by the friends of a felon than this announcement of a commutation of Mr. St. Jago's sentence was received by his affectionate companions. Even the marines, though constitutionally predisposed against him, were glad of the change; and I heard the sentry at the cabin-door say, "I knew the captain had too much regard for the animal to do him an injury."

Injury, indeed! I question whether poor Jacko thought the alternative any favour. At all events, his friends seemed grievously puzzled how to fulfil the conditions of his exemption from a watery grave; for I could perceive a council of war going on upon the lee side of the main deck, as to the best method of proceeding in the affair of the tusks.

"Who'll hold the monkey?" said one.

No answer was made to this. It was like the old story of belling the cat; but there was no Douglas so bold as to try the experiment on Master Jacko, who at any time was a powerful animal, and would, it was naturally inferred, make a tenfold effort when his teeth were the objects of attack.

"Even suppose we could tie the poor unfortunate victim," said the quarter-master, "who knows how to pull out these great big teeth? We might break his jaw in the operation."

There was a long pause.

"I dare say," at length cried one of the party, "that the doctor's mate, who is a good-natured gentleman, would be so kind as to tell us how we can manage this affair."

A deputation of the monkey's friends was accordingly despatched to present a humble petition to the surgeon's assistant, praying that he would be graciously pleased to lend his professional aid in saving the jaw, and perhaps the life, of one of the most diverting vagabonds in His Majesty's service.

Fortunately, the assistant medico was not one of those priggish puppies who, having little professional knowledge to balance their own inherent stupidity, fancy it necessary to support their dignity by the agency of etiquettes alone. He was, on the contrary, a young man of skill, good sense, and right feelings, who cared nothing at all about his dignity when he could be of any use; or rather, who left it to take care of itself, without thinking of anything but his business. To tell the truth, he was so much a lover of his art, that he felt secretly tickled with the idea of a new operation, and experienced on the occasion that peculiar pleasure, known, it is said, only to the faculty, when a complicated and difficult case falls into their hands. He had just mixed a glass of grog, after the day's work was done, and was eyeing the beverage with that sort of serene anticipation which the sober certainty of waking bliss is sure to produce, when the deputation made their appearance, having first sent in the boy, whose arm was still in a sling from the bite of the monkey.

"Are you in a hurry?" said the doctor, on hearing the novel petition; for he had nestled himself into the corner of the berth, with one foot on the bench, the other on the table, and his glass of 'half-and-half' glowing like amber between his eye and the solitary glim of those profound regions, those diamond mines from which the Hoods and the Hardys of times past and times present have been drawn up to the very tip-top of their profession.

"Yes, sir," replied the spokesman of the party. "There is no time to be lost, for the captain, who is in a great rage, says, if we don't extricate the monkey's grinders, overboard he goes to a certainty."

"Extricate is not the word, you blockhead; extract, I suppose you mean. Besides, I fancy it is not his grinders which the captain has ordered to be removed, but his eye-teeth, or tusks, as they may fairly be called."

"Well, sir," said the impatient seaman, "just as you please, tushes or high teeth, if you'll only be kind enough to come and help us out of this plaguy mess, and save the poor dumb animal's life."

The quick clatter of feet up the ladders gave the signal that the successful deputation were returning to the anxious party assembled between the two guns just abaft the gangway-ladder, and nearly abreast the after-hatchway.

"Stop a little, my men!" exclaimed the assistant-surgeon. "How the deuce am I to operate on that beast unless he be held? and who is to hold him?"

"Oh, I'll lend a hand!" cried one. "And I, and I!" said a dozen voices. But when the attempt was made, and Jacko began to learn that mischief was brewing against him, he struggled, and snapped, and squealed at such a rate, that all chance of a successful result was out of the question; while the doctor stood by, laughing, and declaring that he was quite ready, as soon as the patient was willing to submit to the operation; but of this there seemed to be very little chance.

It happened that, the day before, we had split the jib in a squall, and the sail-makers were at that moment in the act of putting in a fresh cloth. Their usual working place, under the half-deck, was close to the scene of the monkey's intended extrication, as the sailors persisted in calling it, in spite of the doctor's repeated corrections of their technology. The sail-maker had just sent for more canvas; and as the boatswain's yeoman, the very individual on whom the monkey had bestowed a shower-bath of grog, delivered the roll of sail-cloth, one of the men said,

"Why should not we parcel him up in a strip of canvas, and so make a regular-built mummy of him; just as I have heard tell the old Egyptians, in the times of Moses and the plagues, used to serve their favourite cats?"

This valuable piece of historical lore was instantly acted upon; and the sail-maker having lent the bolt of canvas, poor unfortunate Saint Jago del Cabo Verde was enveloped in the folds, which were passed round and round his body, legs, and neck, till nothing appeared beyond the package but his rueful countenance. He was now laid on the deck, quite helpless, and more like a log of wood than a living thing.

While these preparations were going on, the learned doctor had leisure to consider the case more attentively; and it occurred to him that it would be needless cruelty to draw the poor beast's tusks, and therefore he exchanged that too well-known instrument, the dentist's key, for a pair of bone-nippers, with which he proposed merely to break off the points.

"I don't know exactly about that," said the perplexed quarter-master, when the assistant-surgeon explained his views of the matter. "The captain said to me, 'Draw those wild bear's tushes out of him;' and I am afraid, if they are only broken, the monkey may still have a chance for going astern."

"Nonsense, nonsense!" interrupted the judicious doctor. "Can you suppose the captain wished that anything should be done to the animal but just enough to prevent his biting the people?"

And, suiting the action to the word, he closed the fatal pincers, and nipped away the ends of the offending tusks, it is to be hoped without causing him any great pain. But although poor Jacko probably did not suffer much, his rage knew no bounds; and no sooner was the canvas unfolded,

than he sprang towards the after-hatchway, and catching the sergeant's hand in his mouth, closed his jaws with all his force. Instinctively the soldier's cane was in the air, but a dozen voices roared out, "He can't bite! He has got no tushes left! Don't hit him!" And, sure enough, although Mr. St. Jago gnawed and struggled, he could make no impression on the well-tanned fist of the veteran, but, at length, slunk off quite abashed, amidst the shouts and laughter of the crew.

When the ship came to England, and was paid off, I turned over the monkey to the boatswain, who always remains in the ship, along with the two other warrant-officers, the gunner and carpenter. This worthy personage used to place his pet in the bow of his little punt, as a boat-keeper, when he himself went on shore at Common Hard. So exhibited, the animal soon attracted notice; and a Jew took such a fancy to him, that the golden bribe which he offered in exchange was too strong for the boatswain, and Master Jacko once more touched terra firma. But the Israelite, as may be supposed, having no other purpose in this transaction beyond the limits of gain, Saint Jago was not long in finding his way back to his old haunts in Exeter 'Change, after an absence of nearly three years. The keeper did not recognise him; nor was it likely that Jacko should claim acquaintance with his former master. I happened, however, one day, not long after the ship was paid off, to be in attendance upon a party seeing the wild beasts, when one of the monkeys set up such a chattering in his cage, that he attracted the attention of every person present, and, amongst the rest, of the keeper of the establishment.

"That animal seems to know you, sir," said he to me; and upon going nearer, I discovered my old and mischievous friend grinning with delight. I must own, indeed, that my heart smote me a little as I looked at the broken teeth, while the poor fellow held out his paw to catch my hand, in the spirit of perfect kindness and forgiveness.

A far different fate, I am sorry to record, befell another monkey of mine, in another ship, and in a very different quarter of the globe. I was then in command of the Lyra, on the homeward voyage from China, after the embassy under Lord Amherst had been concluded. We touched on our way to Calcutta at the Philippine Islands, and, amongst other live stock, laid in a monkey which had seen the world. He was born, they assured us, at Teneriffe, bred at Cadiz, and had afterwards made the voyage across the Pacific Ocean, viâ Lima and Acapulco, to Manilla. This splendid bay is the chief station of the Spaniards in the eastern world, and has long formed one of those links in the vast colonial chain which enabled that once powerful nation to boast with truth that the sun never set on their dominions. Our extensive traveller had made good use of his time and opportunities, and was destined to see a good deal more of men and manners, indeed almost to make out the circuit of the globe. We brought him with us through the Straits of Malacca to Poolo Penang, and from thence carried him across the Bay of Bengal to Calcutta and Madras. We next visited together the Isle of France; the Cape; and, lastly, St. Helena, at the very time the Ex-emperor of the world resided there.

This distinguished monkey differed in one important point from the last, whose adventures have just been related; for he had a particular liking for the marines, who caressed and fed him, and sometimes even ventured to teach him to play off tricks on Jack, which the sailors promised one day to pay back with interest on the soldiers. In so diminutive a vessel as a ten-gun brig, there is but a small party of marines, merely a sergeant's guard, and no commissioned officer, otherwise I hardly think the following trick would have been attempted.

It has been already mentioned, that on Sundays the ship's company are mustered at divisions, ranged on either side of the deck. Every man is then dressed in his very best togs, shaved, and trimmed up as gaily as possible. The marines, of course, sparkle abaft as brightly as polished metal, scarlet cloth, and the eternal pipe-clay, can make them. When all are reported present, the captain walks slowly and solemnly round, eyeing each man from head to foot, to detect a spot of dirt, or a thread opening at a seam, and peering under the breast of every gun to discover some neglected delta of unwashed-away sand; in short, to see that all is right and tight, or 'ship-shape and Bristol fashion;' a term, by the way, of which I know not the origin.

One day, while going these formal rounds, I came to a figure which at first sight puzzled me not a little. This was no other than our great traveller the monkey, rigged out as a marine, and planted like a sentry on the middle step of the short ladder, which, in deep-waisted vessels, is placed at the gangway, and reaches from the deck to the top of the bulwark. The animal was dressed up in a complete suit of miniature uniform, made chiefly of the coloured buntin used for flags, with sundry bits of red baize purloined from the carpenters. His regimental cap was constructed out of painted canvas; and under his lower jaw had been forced a stock of pump-leather, so stiff in itself, and so tightly drawn back, that his head was rendered totally immovable. His chin, and great part of the cheeks, had been shaved with so much care, that only two small curled mustachios and a respectable pair of whiskers remained. His hair behind being tied back tightly into a queue, the poor devil's eyes were almost starting from his head; while the corners of his mouth being likewise tugged towards the ears by the hair-dresser's operations, the expression of his countenance became irresistibly ludicrous. The astonished recruit's elbows were then brought in contact and fastened behind by a lashing, passed round and secured to the middle step of the ladder, so that he could not budge an inch from his position. One of the ship's pistols, fashioned like a musket, and strapped to his shoulder, was tied to his left hand, which again had been sewed by the sail-maker to the waistband of his beautifully pipe-clayed trousers; in short, he was rigged up as a complete sea-soldier in full uniform.

As the captain and his train approached, the monkey began to tremble and chatter; but the men, not knowing how their chief might relish the joke, looked rather grave, while, I own, it cost me no small official struggle to keep down a laugh. I did succeed, however, and merely said, in passing, "You should not play these tricks upon tra-

vellers; cast him loose immediately." One of the men pulled his knife from his breast, and cutting the cord which fastened the poor Spaniard to the ladder, let him scamper off. Unluckily for the gravity of the officers, however, and that of the crew, Jacko did not run below, or jump into one of the boats out of sight, but made straight for his dear friends the marines, drawn up in line across our little hurricane-house of a poop. Unconscious of the ridicule he was bringing on his military patrons, he took up a position in front of the corps, not unlike a fugleman; and I need hardly say, that even the royals themselves, provoked though they were, now joined in the laugh which soon passed along the decks, and was with difficulty suppressed during the remainder of the muster.

A day or two afterwards, and while the monkey was still puzzled to think what was the matter with his chin, he happened to observe the doctor engaged in some chemical process. As his curiosity and desire for information were just such as ought to characterise a traveller of his intelligence, he crept gradually from chest to chest, and from bag to bag, till he arrived within about a yard of Apothecaries' Hall, as that part of the steerage was named by the midshipmen. Poor Mono's delight was very great as he observed the process of pill-making, which he watched attentively while the ingredients were successively weighed, pounded, and formed into a long roll of paste. All these proceedings excited his deepest interest. The doctor then took his spreader, and cut the roll into five pieces, each of which he intended to divide into a dozen pills. At this stage of the process, some one called the pharmacopolist's attention to the hatchway. The instant his back was turned, the monkey darted on the top of the medicine-chest, snapped up all the five masses of pill stuff, stowed them hastily away in his pouch, or bag, at the side of his mouth, scampered on deck, and leaped into the main rigging, preparatory to a leisurely feast upon his pilfered treasures.

The doctor's first feeling was that of anger at the abstraction of his medicines; but in the next instant, recollecting that unless immediate steps were taken, the poor animal must inevitably be poisoned, he rushed on deck, without coat or hat, and knife in hand, to the great surprise and scandal of the officer of the watch.

"Lay hold of the monkey, some of you!" roared the doctor to the people. "Jump up in the rigging, and try to get out of his pouch a whole mess of my stuff he has run off with!"

The men only laughed, as they fancied the doctor must be cracked.

"For any sake," cried the good-natured physician, "don't make a joke of this matter. The monkey has now in his jaws more than a hundred grains of calomel, and unless you get it from him, he will die to a certainty!"

Literally, the quantity Jacko had purloined, had it been prescribed, would have been ordered in these terms:

℞ Hydrargyri submuriatis, ʒij. (Take of calomel 120 grains!)

This appeal, which was quite intelligible, caused an immediate rush of the men aloft; but the monkey, after gulping down one of the lumps, or twenty-four grains, shot upwards to the top, over the rail of which he displayed his shaven countenance, and, as if in scorn of their impotent efforts to catch him, plucked another lump from his cheek, and swallowed it likewise, making four dozen grains to begin with. The news spread over the ship; and all hands, marines inclusive, most of whom had never been farther in the rigging than was necessary to hang up a wet shirt to dry, were seen struggling aloft to rescue the poor monkey from his sad fate. All their exertions were fruitless; for just as the captain of the maintop seized him by the tail, at the starboard royal yard-arm, he was cramming the last batch of calomel down his throat!

It would give needless pain to describe the effects of swallowing the whole of this enormous prescription. Every art was restored to within our reach in the shape of antidotes, but all in vain. The stomach-pump was then, unfortunately, not invented. Poor Jacko's sufferings, of course, were great: first, he lost the use of his limbs, then he became blind, next paralytic; and, in short, he presented, at the end of the week, such a dreadful spectacle of pain, distortion, and rigidity of limb, that I felt absolutely obliged to desire that he might be released from his misery, by being thrown into the sea. This was accordingly done when the ship was going along, for the British Channel, at the rate of seven or eight knots, with a fine fair wind. Very shortly afterwards it fell calm, and next day the wind drew round to the eastward. It continued at that point till we were blown fifty leagues back, and kept at sea so much longer than we had reckoned upon, that we were obliged to reduce our daily allowance of provisions and water to a most painfully small quantity. The sailors unanimously ascribed the whole of our bad luck to the circumstance of the monkey being thrown overboard. I had all my nautical life been well aware that a cat ought never to be so treated; but never knew, till the fate of this poor animal acquainted me with the fact, that a monkey is included in Jack's superstition.

In the same vessel, and on the same voyage to China, the sailors had another pet, of a very singular description; viz. a pig—literally a grunter: nor do I believe there ever was a favourite more deeply cherished, or more sincerely lamented after her singular exit. On our sailing from England, six little sows, of a peculiarly fine breed, had been laid in by my steward. In the course of the voyage, five of these fell under the relentless hands of the butcher; but one of the six, being possessed of a more graceful form than belonged to her sister swine, and kept as clean as any lap-dog, was permitted to run about the decks, amongst the goats, sheep, dogs, and monkeys of our little ark. The occurrence of two or three smart gales of wind off the Cape of Good Hope, and the uncermonious entrance of sundry large seas, swept the decks of most of our live stock, excepting only this one pig, known amongst the crew by the pet name of Jean. During the bad weather off the Bank of Aguilhas, her sowship was stowed in the launch on the booms, and never seen, though often enough heard; but when we hauled up to the northward, and once more entered the trade-winds, on our course to the Straits of Sunda, by which entrance we proposed to gain the Java Sea, Miss Jean was again allowed to range about the decks at large,

and right happy she seemed, poor lady, to exchange the odious confinement of the long-boat for the freedom of the open waist.

In warm latitudes, the men, as I have mentioned before, generally take their meals on deck, and it was Jean's grand amusement, as well as business, to cruise along amongst the messes, poking her snout into every bread-bag, and very often she scalded her tongue in the soup-kids. Occasionally, the sailors, to shew the extent of their regard, amused themselves by pouring a drop of grog down her throat. I never saw her fairly drunk, however, but twice; upon which occasions, as was to be expected, she acted pretty much like a human being in the same hoggish predicament. Whether it was owing to this high feeding, or to the constant scrubbing which her hide received from sand, brushes, and holystones, I know not, but she certainly grew and flourished at a most astonishing rate, and every day waxed more and more impudent and importunate at the dinner-hour. I saw a good deal of this familiarity going on, but had no idea of the estimation Jean was held in, till one day, when we were about half-way across the China Sea, and all our stock of sheep, fowls, and ducks, was expended, I said to the steward, "You had better kill the pig, which, if properly managed, will last till we reach Macao."

The servant stood for some time fumbling with his hair, and shuffling with his feet, muttering something to himself.

"Don't you hear?" I asked. "Kill the pig; and let us have the fry to-day; the head, with plenty of Port wine, as mock-turtle soup, to-morrow; and get one of the legs roasted for dinner on Saturday."

Off he went; but in half an hour returned, on some pretence or other, when he took occasion to ask,

"Did you say Jean was to be killed, sir?"

"Jean! Who is Jean?—Oh, now, I remember; the pig. Yes, certainly. Why do you bother and boggle so about killing a pig?"

"The ship's company, sir—"

"Well; what have the ship's company to say to my pig?"

"They are very fond of Jean, sir."

"The devil they are! Well; what then?"

"Why, sir, they would take it as a great kindness if you would not order her to be killed. She is a great pet, sir, and comes to them when they call her by name, like a dog. They have taught her not to venture abaft the mainmast; but if you only call her, you'll see that what I say is true."

"Indeed! I'll soon try that experiment;" and seized my hat to go on deck.

"Shall I tell the butcher to hold fast?" asked Capewell.

"Of course!" I exclaimed. "Of course!"

Off shot the steward like an arrow; and I could soon distinguish the effect of the announcement, by the intermission of those horrible screams which ever attend the execution of the pig tribe, all which sounds were instantly terminated on the seizings being cut that tied poor Jean's legs.

On reaching the quarter-deck, I told what had passed to the officer of the watch, who questioned its propriety a little, I thought, by the tone of his answer. I, however, called out "Jean! Jean!" and in a moment the delighted pig came prancing along. So great, in fact, was her anxiety to answer the call, as if to show her sense of the trifling favour I had just conferred upon her, that she dashed towards us, tripped up the officer's heels, and had I not caught him, he would have come souse on the deck. Even as it was, he indulged in a growl, and muttered out,

"You see, sir, what your yielding to such whims brings upon us."

I said nothing, and only took care in future to caution my friends to mind their footing when Jean was summoned aft, which, I allow, was very often; for there was no resisting the exhibition to all strangers of such a patent pet as this. To the Chinese in particular our comical favourite became an object of the highest admiration, for the natives of the celestial empire soon recognised in this happiest of swine the celebrated breed of their own country. Many a broad hint I got as to the acceptable nature of such a present, but I was deaf to them all; for I felt that Jean now belonged more to the ship's company than to myself, and that there was a sort of obligation upon me neither to eat her nor to give her away.

Under this tacit guarantee she gained so rapidly in size, fat, and other accomplishments, that, on our return to China, after visiting Loo Choo and other islands of the Japan Sea, the gentlemen of the factory would hardly credit me that this huge monster was the same animal. In talking of Jean's accomplishments, I must not be understood to describe her as a learned pig; for she could neither play cards, solve quadratic equations, nor perform any of those feats which enchant and astonish the eyes of the citizens of London and elsewhere, where many dogs and hogs are devoutly believed to be vested with a degree of intelligence rather above than below the average range of human intellect. Far from this, honest Jean could do little or nothing more than eat, drink, sleep, and grunt; in which respects she was totally unrivalled, and the effect of her proficiency in these characteristic qualities became daily more manifest. At first, as I have mentioned, when her name was called from any part of the ship, she would caper along, and dash impetuously up to the group by whom she was summoned. But after a time she became so excessively fat and lazy, that it required many a call to get her to move, and the offer of a slice of pine-apple, or a handful of lychees, or even the delicious mangosteen, was now hardly enough to make her open her eyes, though in the early stages of the voyage she had been but too thankful for a potato, or the skin of an apple. As she advanced in fatness, she lost altogether the power of walking, and expected the men to bring the good things of their tables to her, instead of allowing her to come for them. This was cheerfully done; and though the only show of gratitude was a grunt, it was taken as a full recompense for all trouble on her account.

At the time of Sir Murray Maxwell's attack on the batteries of Canton, the Lyra, under my command, was lying at Macao, and during our stay the brig was visited by many of the Chinese authorities. We were also watched by a fleet of men-of-war junks, and had some reason to suppose that we might have a brush with them. In that event,

I think our worst chance would have consisted in the enthusiasm with which the Chinese admiral, captains, and crews, would have fought to have put themselves in possession of such a prize as Jean, an object of infinitely greater attraction to them than anything else we had on board, though by this time sundry of the good dame's faculties had failed her. Both her eyes were bunged up by huge bolsters of fat, which admitted only a slender chink of light between them. As she had long lost the power of locomotion, she generally lay flat on her side all day long, giving out a low sort of grunt for more food about once every hour. At this stage of her happiness, two of her legs only touched the deck, the others being rigged out horizontally; but as she became fatter and fatter, the upper pair of legs gradually formed an angle with the horizon, and eventually assumed the position of 45°. The lower legs next began to leave the deck, as the rotundity of her corporation became greater; till, at length, all four legs were erected towards the heavens, and it became a source of discussion amongst the curious, as to which side she was actually lying upon.

While things were in this interesting position, I received orders to get under weigh, and run up the Canton river to Wampoa. Off we set, escorted by the Chinese fleet of a dozen sail of junks. The wind was against us, but we soon beat up to the Bogue, and passed, unharmed, the batteries, which, to use Lord Nelson's expression, Captain Maxwell had made to look very like a plum-pudding. The water in the enormous river of Canton was as smooth as that in the Pool abreast Rotherhithe. The country on both sides being a dead flat, with the sun bright and hot, though it was mid-winter, we appeared to be navigating amongst rice-fields and cane-brakes, and almost as if we had been towed along a huge canal in a wild and swampy country. There was no wind, so that our sails could avail nothing; but the tide was draining upwards, and, as a number of the Indiamen's boats assisted in towing us, we reached our anchorage before night. During this gentlest of all navigations, even the slight motion caused by bracing the yards about, as the faint puffs of wind came to us over the paddy-fields, seemed to disturb the rest (very nearly being eternal) of poor old Jeany. A hollow, difficult, feeble moan, hardly a grunt, gave token of her impatience when a rope came too near her, or when a party of the sailors, running away with the jib-haulyards, tripped over her huge carcass.

We had scarcely anchored at Second Bar, in the midst of the grand fleet of tea ships, when we were boarded by a host of Chinese mandarins and Hong merchants, wearing all the variety of buttons by which ranks are distinguished in that well-classified land. This was not to compliment us, or to offer us assistance, or even to inquire our business. One single object seemed to engage all their thoughts and animate the curiosity of half the province of Quantung. The fame of our fat sow Jean, in short, had far outrun the speed of the Lyra, and nothing was heard on every hand but the wondering exclamations of the natives, screaming out in admiration, "High-yaw! High-yaw!"

We had enough to do to clear the ship at night of these our visitors, but we were by no means left in solitude; for the Lyra's anchorage was completely crowded with native boats. The motive of all this attention on the part of the Chinese was not merely pure admiration of Jean, as we at first suspected; for when the decks came to be washed next morning, and two or three dead ducks were thrown overboard, a rush of a dozen boats took place towards the spot, and there was a battle royal on the river for the precious property. Upon inquiry, we found that foreign ships were always surrounded by the boats from Canton, where the state of want appears to be so great, that the people eagerly seek after the smallest morsels of food, and struggle with the keenest avidity to catch dead stock of any kind thrown overboard.

This at once explained the marvellous degree of attention with which we had been honoured; for the acute Chinese, skilled especially in hog's flesh, saw very well that our pet pig was not long for this world, and knowing that if she died a natural death, we should no more think of eating her than one of our own crew; and having guessed also that we had no intention of "killing her to save her life," they very reasonably inferred, that ere long this glorious *bonne bouche* would be at their disposal.

Our men, who soon got wind of this design on the part of the Chinese, became quite outrageous against Fukee, as the natives are called, and would hardly permit any visitors to come near their favourite, lest they should accelerate her inevitable fate by poison. At length poor dear Jean gave token of approaching dissolution; she could neither eat, nor drink, nor even grunt; and her breathing was like that of a broken bellows: in short, she died! Every art was taken to conceal the melancholy event from the Chinese; but somehow or other it got abroad, for the other English ships were deserted, and long before sunset a dense mass of boats, like a floating town, was formed astern and on both quarters of the Lyra.

The sailors now held a grand consultation as to what was to be done; and after much discussion, and many neat and appropriate speeches, it was unanimously resolved, that the mortal remains of the great sow now no more should be deposited in the mud of the river of Canton, in such a way that the most dexterous and hungry inhabitant of the celestial empire should not be able to fish her up again.

As soon as it was quite dark, and all the Chinese boats sent, as usual, beyond the circle limited by the ship's buoys, the defunct pig's friends set to work to prepare for her obsequies. The chief object was to guard against the ravenous natives hearing the splash as she went overboard; and next, that she should not afterwards float to the surface. The first point was easily accomplished, as will be seen presently; but there was a long debate, in whispers, amongst the men, as to the most expedient plan of keeping the body of their late pet from once more showing her snout above the stream. At length it was suggested by the coxswain of one of the boats which had been sent during the morning to sound the passage, that as the bed of the river where the brig lay consisted of a deep layer of mud, it would be a good thing if Jean's remains could be driven so far into this soft stratum as to lie below the drags and hooks of the Chinese.

This advice was much applauded, and at once acted upon with that happy facility of resource which it is the pride of the profession to have always in store for small as well as for great occasions. The dead sow was first laid on its back, and then two masses of iron ballast, being placed one on each side of the cheek, were lashed securely to the neck and shoulders in such a manner that the ends of the kentlage met across her nose, and formed, as it was very properly called, an extra snout for piercing the mud.

When all was ready, the midship carronade was silently dismounted, the slide unbolted, and the whole removed out of the way. Jean's enormous corporation being then elevated, by means of capstan bars and handspikes, was brought on a level with the port-sill. A slip-rope was next passed between her hind legs, which had been tied together at the feet; and poor Miss Piggy, being gradually pushed over the ship's side, was lowered slowly into the water. When fairly under the surface, and there were no fears of any splash being caused by letting her go, one end of the rope was cast off, upon which the well-loaded carcass shot down perpendicularly at such a rate that there could be no question of its being immersed a fathom deep, at least, in the mud, and, of course, far beyond the reach of the disappointed Chinese!

CHAPTER XV.

DOUBLING THE CAPE.

As our merry little ship approached the far-famed Cape of Good Hope, I often remained on deck after the watch was out, feasting my eyes on the sight of constellations known to me before only by name, and as yet scarcely anchored in my imagination. In looking either at maps of the heavens, or at celestial globes, as we take upon us to call those playthings, we learn to distrust the tales which they tell us of a Centaur with two bright stars at his fetlocks; of a Peacock with a forehead glowing like Aldebaran, the magnificent south eye of the Bull; or of the huge ship Argo ranging across the southern heavens, with a star of the first magnitude flaming in the blade of one of her oars. Of course, all sense and experience are, in most instances, set at defiance in reducing these grand conceptions to terrestrial shapes: forms, indeed, are held at nought, for the whole nomenclature of the stars is expressly one of mere practical utility, sprinkled over with that air of mystery in which the early voyagers delighted to indulge. No one, I suppose, seriously expects to see the actual figures of centaurs, and ships, and peacocks; yet every person must feel some curiosity to get sight of the combinations of stars which had set a-going the active imaginations of those enviable fellows their first observers. Although few only of these groups or clusters can be tortured into anything like definite shapes, the fancy is soon worked upon, and easily lends itself to the graceful illusion. Each succeeding night, as the various clusters rose, crossed the meridian, and sunk again into the western waves, we came more and more into the way, not only of speaking, but thinking of them, under their conventional titles of hydras, doves, toucans, phœnixes, and flying-fish, not forgetting the enormous southern whale, whose beautiful eye, called Fomalhaut, while it flames in the zenith of the Cape, is hardly known to the astronomers of this country, from its greatest altitude, as seen by them, not being ten degrees.

But of all the Antarctic constellations, the celebrated Southern Cross is by far the most remarkable, and must, in every age, continue to arrest the attention of all voyagers and travellers who are fortunate enough to see it. I think it would strike the imagination even of a person who had never heard of the Christian religion; but of this it is difficult to judge, seeing how inextricably our own ideas are mingled up with associations linking this sacred symbol with almost every thought, word, and deed of our lives. The three great stars which form the Cross, one at the top, one at the left arm, and one, which is the chief star, called Alpha, at the foot, are so placed as to suggest the idea of a crucifix, even without the help of a small star, which completes the horizontal beam. When on the meridian, it stands nearly upright; and as it sets, we observe it lean over to the westward. I am not sure whether, upon the whole, this is not more striking than its gradually becoming more and more erect as it rises from the east. In every position, however, it is beautiful to look at, and well calculated, with a little prompting from the fancy, to stir up our thoughts to solemn purpose. I know not how others are affected by such things; but, for myself, I can say with truth, that during the many nights I have watched the Southern Cross, I remember no two occasions when the spectacle interested me exactly in the same way, nor any one upon which I did not discover the result to be somewhat different, and always more impressive, than what I had looked for.

This constellation being about thirty degrees from the south pole, is seen in its whole revolution, and, accordingly, when off the Cape, I have observed it in every stage, from its triumphant erect position, between sixty and seventy degrees above the horizon, to that of complete inversion, with the top beneath, and almost touching the water. This position, by the way, always reminded me of the death of St. Peter, who is said to have deemed it too great an honour to be crucified with his head upwards. In short, I defy the stupidest mortal that ever lived to watch these changes in the aspect of this splendid constellation, and not to be in some degree struck by them.

These speculations recall to me one of the most frequent and painful drawbacks to the unspeakable delights of travelling in remote regions. I allude to the feeling of despair which so often comes over the mind at such moments, when we consider how hopeless it is to impart to our distant friends, by any description, a just share of the pleasure we are receiving, or even to give them a very satisfactory notion of what we ourselves are enjoying. We have no scale in common use whereby we can measure such evanescent feelings. Indeed, as even the observer's sensations change from night to night, or, I might well say, from moment to moment, like the flashes of the aurora, no description could prove adequate, and, I fear, we must remain content to take these good things, like everything else, with their grains of allowance.

These airy visions are sometimes curiously broken in upon by the most common-place incidents, which force us back upon ordinary life. On the 28th of May we overtook a packet on her way to the Brazils from England, which had sailed more than a month after us, but she had not a single newspaper, army list, navy list, or review on board. The mate was totally ignorant of all the interesting topics of that most interesting moment of the war (1812); and in reply to all our questions, merely observed, that everything was just the same as when we left England. The captain was ill in bed, and could not be spoken to, so that this intelligent gentleman, his chief officer, had been lugged on deck to tell the news. He honestly confessed, after being sufficiently baited and badgered by our interrogatories, that even when in England he had no time to look at the newspapers, but that he left public affairs to the management of those whose business it was to look after them, while he found enough to do in looking after the packet.

"I dare say," added the fellow, with rather more dryness of humour than we had imagined was in his doughy composition, "I dare say the whole story you are asking about, of Buonaparte and the Russians, is told very exactly in these bags (pointing to the mail), and if I deliver them safe at Rio, it will be wrong to say I bring no news."

On the 4th of June we had a jollification in honour of good old King George the Third's birth-day. In how many different parts of the world, and with what deep and affectionate sincerity, were cups quaffed and cheers rung out in the same loyal cause! Goldsmith's idea of the lengthening chain which the traveller drags after him, as he moves away from home, has often occurred to me upon these occasions. But the poet uses the figure, if I mistake not, in rather a querulous tone; whereas I would adopt it in a cheerful sense, and suggest, that well-grounded friendships, like well-grounded principles of any sort, are only the more firmly knit by such trials of distance and absence. If sailors would tell the truth, we should find that when abroad and far away, they generally use their distant friends as the captain, mentioned some time ago, did his ship's company's European clothing—stow them away for a future occasion. I do not say that they forget or neglect their friends; they merely put them by in safety for a time. In fact, as the song says, a sailor's heart and soul have plenty to do 'in every port,' to keep fully up to the companionships which are present, without moping and moaning over the remembrance of friends at a distance, who, in like manner, no doubt, unship us also, more or less, from their thoughts, if not from their memory, for the time being; and it is all right and proper that it should be so.

On the 5th of June we parted from our convoy, the China ships; and, alas! many a good dinner we lost by that separation. Our course lay more to the left, or eastward, as we wished to look in at the Cape of Good Hope, while those great towering castles, the tea ships, could not afford time for play, but struck right down to the southward, in search of the westerly winds which were to sweep them half round the globe, and enable them to fetch the entrance of the China seas in time to save the monsoon to Canton. Each ship sent a boat to us with letters for England, to be forwarded from the Cape. This was probably their last chance for writing home; so that, after the accounts contained in these dispatches reached England, their friends would hear nothing of them, till they presented themselves, eighteen months afterwards. Neither did they expect to know what was passing at home till they should touch at St. Helena, on the return voyage, in the latter end of the following year.

I remember looking over the lee-gangway next day, at the first blush of the dawn, during the morning watch, and I could barely distinguish the fleet far to leeward, with their royals just showing above the horizon. There was no haze, hardly any swell on the sea; not a cloud was to be seen, and the nipping air seemed as clear and transparent as if the firmament had been a globe of rock-crystal cut across. The dark blue horizon, which looked almost black against the cold silvery sky, appeared as sharp as if it had been an edge of ground metal. On the spy-glass being directed to the distant ships, depressed by the curvature of the earth more than a hundred feet, we could make out not only their masts and sails, but even some of their ropes. When the sun reached a degree or two of altitude, and shed a bright ray of yellowish light on the canvas, we could almost fancy that we saw the seams in the cloths of their sails, so beautifully clear and well-defined was everything. I know not what it is about such a sunrise at sea that produces so wonderful a freshness of spirits, with a degree of animation as to the present and confidence for the future, rarely to be found at other moments of the day. On taking leave of our convoy, we were reminded that there is always something about the last, the very last look of any object, which brings with it a feeling of melancholy. If there shall happen to be at the bottom of our cup any touch of remorse, it will then be sure to come to the surface, and often, though the admixture be but a drop, it may contaminate the whole. On this occasion, however, we had nothing more serious to reproach ourselves with than sundry impatient execrations with which we had honoured some of our slow-moving, heavy-sterned friends, when we were compelled to shorten sail in a fair wind, in order to keep them company. A smart frigate making a voyage with a dull-sailing convoy, reminds one of the child's story of the provoking journey made by the hare with a drove of oxen.

Our merry attendants, the flying-fish, and others which swarmed about us in the torrid zone, refused to see us across the tropic, and the only aquatics we fell in with afterwards were clumsy whales and grampuses, and occasionally a shoal of white porpoises. Of birds there were plenty, especially albatrosses. The captain, being a good shot with a ball, brought down one of these, which measured seven feet between the tips of the wings. I have several times seen them twelve feet; and I heard a well-authenticated account of one measuring sixteen feet from tip to tip. On the 22d of June we came in sight of the high land on the northern part of the peninsula of the Cape of Good Hope, the far-famed Table Mountain, which looked its character very well, and really did not disappoint us, though, in general, its height, like

that of most high lands, is most outrageously exaggerated in pictures. The wind failed us during the day, and left us rolling about till the evening, when the breeze came too late to be of much use. Next day we rounded the pitch of the Cape, but it blew so strong from the northward, right out of False Bay, accompanied by rain and a high sea, that we found it no easy job to hold our own, much less to gain the anchorage. But on the 24th of June, the day after, the wind moderated and became fair, the weather cleared up, and we sailed almost into Simon's Bay, a snug little nook at the north-western angle of False Bay. It then fell calm, but the boats of the men-of-war at anchor, His Majesty's ships Lion, Nisus, and Galatea, soon towed us into our birth. During the winter of that hemisphere, which corresponds to our northern summer, the only safe quarters for ships is in Simon's Bay, on the south side of the Cape peninsula. Table Bay, so called from the well-known mountain of that name almost overhanging it, is not safe in winter, when the north-westerly gales blow right in, and often cast those ships on the beach which have the temerity to try the experiment of anchoring there.

I have a perfect recollection of the feelings with which I leaped out of the boat, and first set foot on the continent of Africa, but am prevented from describing these poetical emotions by the remembrance, equally distinct, of the more engrossing anxiety which both my companion and myself experienced about our linen, then on its way to the laundress in two goodly bundles. For the life of me, I cannot separate the grand ideas suitable to the occasion, from the base interests connected with cotton shirts and duck trousers. And such is the tormenting effect of associations, that when I wish to dwell upon the strange feelings, partly professional and partly historical, caused by actually gazing on the identical Cape of Good Hope, a spot completely hammered into the memory of all sailors, straightway I remember the bitter battling with the washerfolks of Simon's Town touching the rate of bleaching shirts; and both the sublime and the beautiful are lost in the useful and ridiculous. For this, and some other reasons, I feel unwilling at present to dwell long upon so well-known a place as the Cape, which, as I visited it three times afterwards, under more advantageous circumstances, I may find better opportunities of doing.

The 3d of July was named for sailing; but the wind, which first came foul, soon lulled into a calm, then breezed up again; and so on alternately, baffling us in all our attempts to get to sea. Nor was it till the 5th that we succeeded in forcing our way out against a smart south-easter, with a couple of reefs in the topsails, and as much as we could do to carry the mainsail. A westerly current (that is, a current running towards the west from the east) sweeps, at all seasons of the year, round the Cape of Good Hope, and sometimes proves troublesome enough to outward-bound ships. This stream, which deposits a huge bank or spit of sand off Cape Aguilhas, is evidently caused by the trade-wind in the southern parts of the Indian ocean. For three days we were bamboozled with light south-easterly airs and calms, which we had little expected; but on the 8th of July, which is the depth of winter in that hemisphere, there came on a spanking snuffler from the north-west, before which we spun two hundred and forty miles, clean off the reel, in twenty-four hours.

Nothing is more delightful than the commencement of such a fair wind. The sea is then smooth, and the ship seems literally to fly along; the masts and yards bend forwards, as if they would drop over the bows, while the studding-sail booms crack and twist, and, unless great care be taken, sometimes break across; but still, so long as the surface of the sea is plane, it is astonishing what a vast expanse of canvas may be spread to the rising gale. By and by, however, it becomes prudent to take in the royals, flying-jib, and top-gallant studding-sails. The boatswain takes a look at the gripes and other fastenings of the boats and booms; the carpenter instinctively examines the port-lashings, and draws up the pump-boxes to look at the leathers; while the gunner sees that all the breechings and tackles of the guns are well secured before the ship begins to roll. The different minor heads of departments, also, to use their own phrase, smell the gale coming on, and each in his respective walk gets things ready to meet it. The captain's and gun-room steward beg the carpenter's mate to drive down a few more cleats and staples, and, having got a cod line or two from the boatswain's yeoman, or a hank of marline stuff, they commence double lashing all the tables and chairs. The marines' muskets are more securely packed in the arm-chest. The rolling tackles are got ready for the lower yards, and the master, accompanied by the gunner's mate, inspects the lanyards of the lower rigging. All these, and twenty other precautions, are taken in a manner so slow and deliberate that they would hardly catch the observation of a passenger. It might almost seem as if the different parties were afraid to let out the secret of their own lurking apprehension, but yet were resolved not to be caught unprepared.

Of these forerunners of a gale none is more striking than the repeated looks of anxiety which the captain casts to windward, as if his glance could penetrate the black sky lowering in the north-west, in order to discover what was behind, and how long with safety he might carry sail. Ever and anon he shifts his look from the wind's eye, and rests it on the writhing spars aloft, viewing with much uneasiness the stretching canvas all but torn from the yards. Perhaps he takes hold of a backstay, or a weather-brace, now as tight as a harp-string, and mutters to himself, "Hold on, good rope!" He then steps below, and for the fortieth time reads off the barometer, and with an anxious sigh acknowledges to himself that the mercury is falling rapidly. Before re-mounting the ladder he probably takes another look at "Horsburgh's General Remarks on the Winds and Weather," and half makes up his mind to shorten sail before something goes.

On returning to the deck he finds that, during the few minutes he has been below, the breeze has freshened considerably, or, it may be, that coming suddenly upon it again, he views it differently. At all events, he feels the necessity of getting the sails in while he yet can, or before "God Almighty takes them in for him," as the sailors say when matters have been so long de-

ferred, that not only canvas and yards, but even masts, are at times suddenly wrenched out of the ship, and sent in one confused mass far off to leeward, whirling in the gale!

People may be startled, and not unreasonably, at the profane levity of the above expression, which I shall not, of course, dream of excusing. But I may take occasion to remark, that this expression, and several others, carry with them little or none of the impious spirit of common oaths and execrations. On the contrary, they are indicative, in a coarse way, of very solemn and almost devout feelings. It is but doing justice to poor Jack to add, that although he is much more free than he ought to be in the use of those rugged and vituperative figures of speech indigenous to the ocean, there is, upon the whole, less indelicacy in his slang than in that of any other dialect of low life which it has been my misfortune to hear. Amongst the officers, such things have gradually died away, and much swearing in a gentleman is now considered almost as great a piece of blackguardism as story-telling.

The men, who are generally well aware of the necessity of shortening sail long before the captain has made up his mind to call the hands for that purpose, have probably been collected in groups for some time in different parts of the upper deck, talking low to one another, and looking aloft with a start, every now and then, as the masts or yards give an extra crack.

"Well! this is packing on her," says one, laying an emphasis on the word 'is.'

"Yes!" replies another; "and if our skipper don't mind, it will be packing off her presently," with an emphasis on the word 'off.' "Right well do I know these Cape gales," adds an ancient mariner of the South Seas; "they snuffle up in a minute; and, I'll answer for it, the captain will not carry sail so long off Cape Aguilhas, when he has gone round that breezy point as often as old Bill has."

At this moment the tardy voice of the commander, long unwilling to lose any part of the fair wind, is at length heard, giving the reluctant order, "Turn the hands up, shorten sail!" The ready clatter of feet, and the show of many heads at all the hatchways, and perhaps the sound of a suppressed laugh amongst the men who have been gossiping and wagering about the gale, give sufficient indication that this evolution has been expected for some time.

"All hands shorten sail!" calls out the boatswain, after a louder and sharper note than usual from his pipe, winded not half the ordinary length of time, though twice as shrilly; for his object is to mark on the ears of the people the necessity of unusual expedition and exertion. A clever and experienced person filling this important situation will soon teach the men to distinguish between the various notes of his call, though to unpractised ears the sounds might appear unvaried.

"Shorten sail! that's easier said than done," growls forth some hard-up old cock, as he steps on the forecastle, and glances his weather-wise eye towards the clouds in the black and bleak north-west, and then measures the many thousand yards of bonnie Dundee canvas still unfurled aloft, and stretched out to catch the wind, tugging and struggling to get free from the masts and yards.

"No! not a bit easier said than done," unexpectedly observes the captain, but quite good-humouredly, having accidentally heard the seaman's remark, on going forward to the spot where the main-tack is almost tearing away the chestree; "Not a bit easier, provided you, my old fellow, and the young hands about you, will only work as smartly and cheerfully as I know you can do when you have a mind. Come, my lads, are you all ready forward?"

It is a trying moment both for the sails and yards, when the order is actually given to commence shortening sail, if the pressure from the wind be considerable. At ordinary times, all that is necessary is to have men stationed to lower away the haulyards and ease off the tacks at the proper moment, while others gather in the sails as they come down, fluttering a little perhaps, if not carefully managed, but still quietly and easily, as well as quickly. When, however, the wind has risen to a pitch beyond its due proportion to the canvas spread, and the captain's anxiety to make the most of a fair wind has tempted him to carry on too long, the case becomes very different. This will be easily understood, when I mention that several of the very same ropes which keep the sails in their places, contribute also an important share to the support of those spars to which the sails are bent, or to which they may be hauled out. Consequently, the moment the ropes alluded to, which are technically named the haulyards and tacks, are slackened, the yards and booms being suddenly deprived of these material supports are very apt to be sprung, that is, cracked across, or even carried away, which means being snapped right in two as short as a carrot, to use Jack's very appropriate simile.

It is quite true, that lowering away the sail and easing off the tack (I am speaking now of a studding-sail) does diminish the tug or pressure of the sail on the spar, and, of course, both the yard and the boom have less duty to perform. Still, however, as the loss of support is generally greater, and always more instantaneous, than the diminution of strain, the moment which succeeds the order to "Lower away!" is especially trying to the nerves of the officer who is carrying on the duty. If, indeed, he be an experienced and skilful man, or one who, besides the facility and confidence which come with long habit, possesses a well-grounded knowledge of the principles of his profession, and thence feels himself able to estimate the value of new combinations, he will delight in the opportunity of bringing such theoretical considerations to bear on the practice of seamanship. Such an officer will smile in the very teeth of the gale whose violence he defies, confident in his capacity to gather in every foot of canvas without even a seam-rip in any one sail. I have not unfrequently seen comparatively young officers handle the sails and yards of a ship with perfect ease, at times when the oldest sailors on board were puzzled how to get things out of the mess into which the winds had blown them, or when the still more unruly and perplexing perturbations (as the astronomers call them) of ignorance had left them. One officer, for instance, may direct the preparations for shortening sail to be made according to the most orthodox rules laid down in Hamilton Moore's 'Examination of

a Young Sea Officer,' and yet when he comes to give the fatal word "Lower away! haul down!" everything shall go wrong. The tack being eased off too soon, the spar breaks in the middle, and the poor topmast studding-sail is spitted like a lark on the broken stump of the boom, while the lower studding-sail, driven furiously forward by the squall, is pierced by the sprit-sail yard-arm, the cat-head, and the bumpkin; or it may be wrapped round the bowsprit, like so much wet drapery in the inimitable Chantrey's studio over the clay figure of an Indian bishop.

"What the blue blazes shall I do next?" moans the poor puzzled devil of an officer of the watch, who sees the confusion caused entirely by his own bad management, ten times worse confounded by his ignorant, and, of course, ill-directed further endeavours to put things right. On such an occasion, a kind and considerate captain will perhaps fairly walk below, and so leave the mortified youth to get himself out of the scrape as he best can, and rather lose a small spar, or a bolt of canvas, than expose one of his officers to the humiliation of having the task transferred to another. If this forbearance be not overdone, the public service, in the long-run, will probably be far less harmed by the expenditure of a few stores than it might be by an injury done to the credit, and consequently to the authority, of its executive. Sometimes, however, the captain will edge himself near the embarrassed officer, and, without the action being detected by any one else, whisper a few magical words of instruction in the young man's ear, by which the proper train of directions are set agoing, and the whole confusion of ropes, sails, and yards, speedily brought into order. If this fails, the hands are called, upon which the captain himself, or more generally the first lieutenant, takes the trumpet; and the men, hearing the well-known, confident voice of skill, fly to the proper points, 'monkey paw' the split sails, clear the ropes, which an instant before seemed inextricably foul, and in a very few minutes reduce the whole disaster to the dimensions of a common occurrence.

"Now, you may call the watch," says the captain; and the reproved officer again takes charge of the deck. I need hardly say, that any young man who possesses a spirit above that of an animal the name of which must not appear in print, ought rather to wear his hands to the bone in learning his duty, than to expose himself to such mortifications as this. And yet, after all, which of us shall say that we may not be subjected to trials almost as humiliating when we come, as we often must come, to engage in professional matters with which we happen to have had little or no previous experience?

For my own part, if I were suddenly placed in command of a ship in the Grecian archipelago, and told to go on to Smyrna, or back to Malta, I should have no more idea of which way to steer, in order to take advantage of the prevalent winds and currents, than if my knowledge of navigation had been limited during the last thirty years to my father's horse-pond, on which I first ventured to trust myself afloat. In the same way, perhaps, the most knowing of my officers, who, if experienced in the navigation of the Levant, would, no doubt, on such an occasion, secretly divert himself at his captain's expense, might be a little less disposed to grin at the local ignorance of others, were the ship popped down between the Rabbit and Coney, off Tonjong Boloos, in the Straits of Singapore, and he was told to shape a course for Poolo Penang through the Straits of Malacca, or to return to the China Sea.

Let us, however, suppose all the extra sails taken in without accident, and rolled up with as much haste as may be consistent with that good order which ought never to be relaxed under any degree of urgency. In fine weather, it is usual to place the studding-sails in the rigging, with all their gear bent, in readiness to be whipped up to the yard-arm at a moment's warning; but when a breeze such as we are now considering is on the rise, it is thought best to unbend the tacks and haulyards, and to stow the sails in some convenient place, either on the booms, between the boats, or in the hammock-nettings. For the same reason, the small sails are sent on deck, together with as much top hamper as can readily be moved. These things are scarcely bundled up and lifted out of the way before the long-expected order to reef topsails is smartly given out, and crowds of men are seen skipping up the tight weather-rigging, with a merry kind of alacrity, which always makes a captain feel grateful to the fellows—I do not well know why; for, as there is then no real danger, there seems nothing particularly praiseworthy in this common-place exertion. Perhaps the consciousness that a storm is coming on, during which every nerve on board may be strained, makes the captain see with pleasure a show of activity which, under other circumstances, may be turned to trials of the utmost hardihood and daring.

Be this as it may, the yards come sliding down the well-greased masts; the men lie out to the right and left, grasp the tumultuous canvas, drag out the earings, and tie the points, with as perfect deliberation as if it were a calm, only taking double pains to see that all is right and tight, and the reef-band straight along the yard. The order has been given to take in the second and third reefs only; but the men linger at their posts, expecting the further work which they know is necessary. The captain of the top, instead of moving in, continues to sit astride the spar, dangling his legs under the weather yard-arm, with the end of the close reef-earing in his hand, quite as much at his ease as any well-washed sea-bird that ever screamed defiance to a pitiless south-wester.

Johnny's anticipations prove right, for the anxious commander, after gazing twice or thrice to windward, again consulting his barometer, looking six or eight times at his watch in as many minutes, to learn how many hours of daylight are yet above the horizon, and perhaps also stealing a professional opinion from his first lieutenant, an officer probably of much more technical experience than himself, decides upon close-reefing. If he be a man of sense, and wishes the work to be done quickly and well, he must not now hesitate about starting the topsail sheets, and it will certainly be all the better if one or both the clew-lines be likewise hauled close up.

The mainsail is now to be taken in; and as the method of performing this evolution has long been

a subject of hot controversy at sea, I take the opportunity of saying, that Falconer's couplet,

> "For he who strives the tempest to disarm
> Will never first embrail the lee yard-arm,"

has, in my opinion, done a world of mischief, and split many thousands of sails.

I, at least, plead guilty to having been sadly misled by this authority for many years, since it was only in the last ship I commanded that I learned the true way to take in the mainsail when it blows hard. The best practice certainly is, to man both buntlines and the lee leechline well, and then to haul the LEE clew-garnet close up, before starting the tack or slacking the bowline. By attending to these directions, the spar is not only instantaneously relieved, but the leeward half of the sail walks sweetly and quietly up to the yard, without giving a single flap. After which the weather-clew comes up almost of itself, and without risk or trouble.

Meanwhile the ship is spinning along very nearly at the same rate as at first, though two-thirds of the canvas have been taken off her. These variations in speed are odd enough, and, at times, not easily accounted for. When the breeze first comes on, all sail set, and the water quite smooth, the ship can be steered on a straight course without any difficulty, and she really seems to fly. When the log is hove, it is discovered, we shall suppose, that she is going eleven knots. Well, the wind increases, and in come the studding-sails; but as the water is still smooth, the single-reefed topsails and topgallant-sails, may be carried, though it is evident the ship is rather overpressed, or, at all events, not another stitch of sail could be set.

"Heave the log again, and see what she goes now!" says the officer. "How much?"

"Eleven knots and a half, sir," replies the middy of the watch.

Presently the sea rises, the masts bend, the ship begins to stagger along, groaning and creaking in every joint, under the severe pressure. The topsails are close-reefed to meet the increased wind; but still as before she is under quite as much canvas as she can possibly bear.

"Heave the log now!" again says the officer. "Ten knots!" reports the middy.

By and by the courses are reefed, and before dark the mainsail is rolled up, the fore and mizen-topsails handed, and the top-gallant yards sent on deck. The sea has now risen to a disagreeable height; and the steering, in spite of every care, becomes wilder and much more difficult; and as the ship forges into the breast of the waves, or rises with a surge not much less startling, her way seems deadened for the moment, till she bounds up again on the top of the sea, to woo, as it were, the embraces of the rattling gale. The storm is not slow to meet this rude invitation; while, if the ropes, sails, and masts, be all wet, as they generally are in such a breeze, it is difficult to conceive any tones more gruff and unsentimental than the sounds of this boisterous courtship.

In line-of-battle ships, and even in frigates, the close-reefed main-topsail and foresail may be carried, for a very long time, when going nearly before the wind; and indeed it is the best seamanship to crack on her; for when the gale rises to its highest pitch, and the seas follow in great height, they are apt to curl fairly on board, and play fine pranks along the decks, even if the violence of the blow on the quarter do not broach the ship to, that is, twist her head round towards the wind in such a way that the next sea shall break over her gangway, and in all probability sweep away the masts. In small vessels it becomes a most anxious period of the gale when the sea has got up so much that it is difficult to steer steadily, and when the wind blows so strong that enough sail cannot be carried to keep the ship sufficiently ahead of the waves, except at the risk of tearing the masts away. When the requisite degree of speed cannot be secured, the inevitable consequence, sooner or later, is, that a monstrous pea-green solid sea walks most unceremoniously on board, over the taffrail, and dashes along the decks like those huge debacles, of which some geologists so confidently point out the traces on the earth's surface.

I never happened actually to witness a catastrophe of this kind on the great scale, though I have seen one or two smartish gales in my time. Indeed the most serious evils I recollect to have been present at occurred on board the Volage, on the very passage to India which I am now describing. The following are the words in which these incidents are noticed in my journal:—

"On the 13th of July, off the Cape of Good Hope, in the midst of a heavy winter's gale, our worthy passenger, Sir Evan Nepean, governor of Bombay, was thrown down the ladder, by the violent rolling of the ship; and another gentleman, the Baron Tuyll, the best-natured and deservedly popular passenger I ever saw afloat, was very nearly washed out of his cot by a sea which broke into the stern windows of the captain's cabin."

I have often enough been close to wars and rumours of wars, but was never in a regular sea-fight; and though I have also witnessed a few shipwrecks and disasters, I never was myself in much danger of what might be honestly called a lee shore; neither is it my good fortune to be able to recount, from personal knowledge, any scenes of hardship or suffering from hunger, cold, or any other misery. My whole professional life, in short, has been one of such comparative ease and security, that I cannot now remember ever going far beyond twenty-four hours without a good belly-ful. Still I have often been forced to take a high degree of interest in formidable adventures of this kind, from their happening in fleets of which my own ship formed a part, or from these incidents including among the sufferers persons to whom I was attached.

In the year 1815, I accompanied a convoy of homeward-bound Indiamen from Ceylon, and a right merry part of the voyage it was while we ran down a couple of thousand miles of the south-east trade-wind; for these hospitable floating nabobs, the East India captains, seldom let a day pass without feasting one another; and we, their naval protectors, came in for no small share of the good things, for which we could make but a poor return. Along with our fleet, there sailed from Ceylon a large ship, hired as a transport by Government to bring home invalid soldiers. There were about 500 souls in her; of these a hundred were women, and more than a hundred children.

I was accidentally led to take a particular interest in this ill-fated vessel, from the circumstance of there being four fine boys on board, sons of a military friend of mine at Point de Galle. I had become so well acquainted with the parents of these poor little fellows during my frequent visits to Ceylon, that one day, before sailing, I playfully offered to take a couple of the boys in my brig, the Victor, an eighteen-gun sloop of war; but as I could not accommodate the whole family, the parents, who were obliged to remain abroad, felt unwilling to separate the children, their only children, alas! and my offer was declined.

Off we all sailed, and reached the neighbourhood of the Cape without encountering anything in the way of an adventure; there, however, commenced the disasters of the unfortunate Arniston, as this transport was called. She had no chronometer on board; a most culpable and preposterous omission in the outfit of a ship destined for such a voyage. The master told me that he himself was not in circumstances to purchase so expensive an instrument, the cost of a good chronometer being at least fifty or sixty guineas, and that the owners considered the expense needless. He also stated, that on his remonstrating still more, and urging upon these gentlemen that their property would be ten times more secure if he were furnished with the most approved means of taking good care of it, he was given to understand, that if he did not choose to take the ship to sea without a chronometer, another captain could easily be found who would make no such new-fangled scruples. The poor master shrugged his shoulders, and said he would do his best; but having often rounded the Cape, he knew the difficulties of the navigation, when there was nothing but the dead reckoning to trust to.

During our passage from Ceylon, it was the practice every day, at one o'clock, for the Indiamen, as well as the men-of-war, to make signals showing the longitude of each ship by chronometer. Thus we had all an opportunity of comparing the going of our respective time-keepers, and thus, too, the master of the Arniston was enabled to learn his place so accurately, that if he had only kept company with his friends the Indiamen, each of whom was provided with at least four or five chronometers, the deficiency in his equipment might never have led to the dreadful catastrophe which speedily followed the loss of this assistance.

It was late in the month of May when we reached the tempestuous regions of the Cape; and we were not long there before a furious gale of wind from the westward dispersed the fleet, and set every one adrift upon his own resources. The poor Arniston was seen at sunset, on the day the gale commenced, with most of her sails split, but not otherwise in danger, for she had a good offing, and the wind was not blowing on shore. Three heavy gales followed in such quick succession during the next week, that not only the ordinary course, but the velocity of the current was changed, and instead of running, as it almost always does, to the westward, it set, on the days in question to the south-eastward. According to the most moderate allowance for the current, all circumstances being taken into consideration, any navigator might fairly have supposed that, in the five days which elapsed from the 24th of May to the 28th inclusive, his ship would have been drifted to the westward by the current at least a hundred miles. Our chronometers, however, distinctly showed us that we had been carried, not, as usual, to the westward, but actually to the eastward, a distance of more than a hundred miles; so that, in less than a week, there occurred upwards of two hundred miles of error in the dead reckoning.

The master of the Arniston, doubtless, after making every allowance, according to the best authorities, and working by the most exact rules of navigation of which he could avail himself, naturally inferred that his ship was more than a hundred miles to the westward of the Cape, and he incautiously considered himself justified in bearing up before a south-easterly gale, and steering, as he had so much reason to suppose he was doing, straight for St. Helena.

It is very important to remark, in passing, to professional men, that no ship off the Cape, and under any circumstances, ought ever to bear up, without first heaving the deep sea-lead. If soundings are obtained on the Bank, it is a sure symptom that the ship is not sufficiently advanced to the westward to enable her to steer with safety to the north-north-westward for St. Helena. It is clear the ship in question must have omitted this precaution.

All that is known of this fatal shipwreck is simply that the Arniston, with a flowing sheet, and going nine knots, ran among the breakers in Struy's Bay, nearly a hundred miles to the eastward of the Cape. The masts went instantly by the board, and the sea, which broke completely over all, tore the ship to pieces in a few minutes; and out of her whole crew, passengers, women, children (my four poor little friends inclusive!) only half-a-dozen seamen reached the coast alive.

The people saved were illiterate sailors; and all they could tell was, that they bore up and made all sail for St. Helena, judging themselves well round the Cape. This scanty information, however, taken along with the correct knowledge of the currents afforded by our dead reckoning when compared with the chronometer, was quite enough to establish the important fact, that this valuable ship, and all the lives on board of her, were actually sacrificed to a piece of short-sighted economy. That they might have been saved had she been supplied with the worst chronometer that was ever sent to sea, is also quite obvious. Supposing the Arniston to have been navigated by a watch so bad as not to be depended upon within sixty seconds, or one whole minute of time, per day, still, her accumulated error in longitude, at the end of our stormy week off the Cape, would not have exceeded one degree and three quarters. Now, even with this enormous error in the vessel's position, as determined by such a chronometer, this melancholy shipwreck might have been prevented. Yet I am sure practical men will agree with me, that in assuming sixty seconds a-day as the limit of the uncertainty of a watch's rate, I have taken a quantity four or five times greater than there was need for. Surely no time-keeper that was ever sold as such by any respectable watchmaker for more than thirty or forty guineas, has been found to go so outrageously ill as not to be depended upon for one week, within less than

ten or fifteen seconds a-day. And as I have shown that a chronometer whose rate was uncertain, even to an extent five or six times as great as this, would have saved the Arniston, any further comment on such precious economy is needless.

CHAPTER XVI.

ISLAND OF JOHANNA.

It was not till about ten days after we had rounded the Cape of Good Hope, and struggled hard against baffling easterly winds, that we at length reached the tail of the south-west monsoon, in latitude 27½° S. and longitude 37° E. This was on the 21st of July, off Delagoa Bay, near the southern entrance of the great Mozambique Channel, which lies between the island of Madagascar and the coast of Africa. It was delightful to feel ourselves spinning along at the rate of nine and a half, with the ship's head at last fairly looking towards our port, Bombay; especially after having been detained more than a fortnight off the Cape, during which period we had advanced hardly so much as we might have done in four days with a favourable breeze. But nothing passes more quickly off the cheerful mind than the recollection of adverse winds and bad weather. As we hoist away the studding-sails, ease off the sheets, and luxuriate in the prospect of the clear blue sky, we fancy we shall have a fair wind and pleasant weather all the rest of the voyage. On this occasion it proved pretty much as we had anticipated; for on the 25th of July we came in sight of Johanna, one of the Comoro Islands, and anchored next day, without having seen either Africa on the left, or Madagascar on the right. The narrowest part of the Mozambique Channel is not much short of two hundred miles across, and at most places is more than twice as wide; consequently, as we kept near the middle, we had no chance of seeing the land on either side, and to all appearance we were still on the wide ocean.

The well-known massacre of Madagascar in Robinson Crusoe, fable though it be, and fifty other stories from the same source, rivet themselves on the imagination with such tenacity, that I have never found myself near the imaginary scenes of that celebrated voyager's adventures without longing to have a scuffle with his savages, or to try my own hand at some of his thousand and one resources. It is this charming facility in combining difficulties, backed by unwearied, ingenuity in devising remedies for evils which cannot be altogether avoided, that, I suspect, gives De Foe's work its chief interest in the eyes of sailors. In fact, I have often, in the course of my professional life, had occasion to know the value, not exactly of those very resources, but of similar devices, suggested by Robinson's successful example. He also teaches most admirably, that there is a consolation, if not a complete remedy, for almost everything; and that by honourable means and manly exertions there are few difficulties which may not be surmounted.

We anchored in Johanna Bay, within a few hundred yards of the shore, abreast of a long grove of tall cocoa-nut trees, forming a fringe, as it were, to a narrow belt of snow-white beach, composed apparently of bits of broken coral. This beautiful little roadstead, or cove, lies on the north side of the island; and the best situation in which to moor a ship is just off a little rivulet, bearing about south, with the high volcanic-looking peak south by east half east, the Mahometan mosque east, and not more than a quarter of a mile from the shore. It was the first time I had ever beheld the gorgeous scenery of the eastern hemisphere; for although I had seen cocoa-nuts and other trees of the palm tribe at Antigua and St. Christopher's, the Caribee Islands seemed much less striking than those of the Mozambique, chiefly, perhaps, from the West Indian landscape being disturbed by images not quite in character with the tropics. I allude to the European sort of houses of the planters, to the English-looking boats, the numerous white people, and even to the style of agriculture in the West. But at the Comoro Islands, where all is primitive and oriental, the eye of the traveller is not provoked with sights it has ever rested on before; all that he sees is new, and as thoroughly tropical as heart can desire. The natives, though not jet black, like negroes, are sable enough, being of a very deep bronze colour; and the climate being tolerably hot, neither they nor their African slaves are much encumbered with dress. Most of them can chatter a little English, picked up from the Indiamen which call for fruit and vegetables; and what is particularly comical, these islanders have appropriated the titles of English noblemen, or other distinguished personages, which names they retain and are known by amongst themselves, as well as by visitors.

On steering towards the anchorage, a pilot came off who announced himself as Lord Gibbon. We knew the way perfectly, but accepted his services for the fun of the thing, on his producing a handful of certificates of his qualifications. We were even more interested with his canoe than with himself, for we had never before seen such a thing. Had he rowed off in a boat, instead of paddling off in a canoe, the disappointment must have been considerable; for nothing, perhaps, is more teasing, on coming to a new place, than to find things not different enough from those we have left. No boat, however, could well be more characteristic of the region we had got into than this picturesque little vessel, which was rudely fashioned out of the trunk of a tree, thirty or forty feet long and only one and a half wide, sharp like a wedge at both ends, and being without a keel or bearings of any kind, it would have upset with the smallest load, or even without a load, had there not been a couple of very long outriggers placed across, and extending both ways. To the extremities of these spars was attached, by means of short uprights, a plank, or rather beam, one on each side, which just touched the water, and by their floating at the end of these long levers, or outriggers, kept this most ticklish of barks from turning over.

It is obvious, that a canoe so fitted could not come alongside of a ship, at least in the usual way; so our friend Lord Gibbon was obliged to run stem on, when, by planting himself in the bow, he hoped to catch old of the side-ropes, and so scramble up. The ship was stealing through the water

at the rate of a couple of knots only; nevertheless, although the surface of the bay was as smooth as oil, the six black paddlers bungled their operation, and missed the gangway. The leadsman in the main-chains seeing the pilot adrift, called in at one of the quarter-deck ports for a rope, and the end of the cross-jack brace being handed to him, he threw it to the natives. Lord Gibbon was standing in the bow of his canoe, in a long flowing white robe and a Turkish-like turban, altogether an amusing contrast to his crew, whose united wardrobe would scarcely have made a couple of pocket-handkerchiefs. His lordship caught hold of the line, and made a flying leap towards the ship, but, alas! without the desired effect. Either the rope was slack, or the unwonted entanglement of his robes bamboozled his feet, for souse he went over head and ears into the water, out of which he was dragged by our laughing rogues, who planted him, apparently in a woful condition, on the quarter-deck. He seemed very indifferent, however, to appearances, and presented his dripping certificates with a good grace, adding, in tolerable English, the King of Johanna's compliments, and offers of all that his island afforded. The ambassador was without shoes or stockings, and we thought he must have lost them in the scramble; but our inquiries on this head were diverted to the state of his mouth, which we feared had been cut by the fall, for it seemed to be bleeding. He soon relieved us from this anxiety, by showing that what we took for blood was the effect of chewing the betel-nut, another consequence of which was the jet black colour of his teeth.

We had expected to have been surrounded by the natives in their canoes the moment the anchor was down; but not one appeared besides the pilot, who told us that the king, having the most entire want of confidence in the honesty of his subjects, and being extremely desirous of keeping the peace, had given orders for no one to come near us. We, of course, begged this interdict might be removed, assuring the messenger that we should take good care of our property, and not fail to preserve the peace likewise. As soon as the ship was secured, all the officers except one or two were kindly allowed by the captain to have a run on shore. One of the passengers, two of the mids, and I, made a party, and set off in quest of adventures, towards the town, which lay at the distance of a mile and a half from the ship, and rather up the hill. On landing, we found ourselves in a delightful cocoa-nut grove, of which the underwood consisted of plantains, bananas, oranges, lime-trees, and, I believe, mangoes. The cocoa-nuts shot up to the height of seventy, and sometimes eighty feet: we were told that a hundred feet is not uncommon, but I think we saw none so high. The fruit grows in immense clusters at the top of the stem, close up to the branches. The tree from top to bottom is surrounded by a series of rings, doubtless the traces of former circles of branches which have successively flourished, decayed, and fallen off. These rings are very distinct near the top, but lower down, the trunk becomes so smooth that the natives are obliged to cut notches to assist them in getting up, either to pull the fruit, or to tap the tree of its juice, which is called toddy by the English.

The method used by the natives of the East in performing this feat of climbing, which is really a curious one, may be easily described. In the first place, they unite their feet, either at the great toes or the ankles, by a thong or strap about ten or twelve inches in length. This lies across the steps or notches cut in the tree, and is strong enough to support the whole weight of the body. A flat broad belt is then made to pass round the tree, and also round the man's middle, inclosing both in one ring, as it were, the body being at the distance of a foot or so from the tree. The climber commences by placing the strap which ties his feet together across the first or lowest step, while he adjusts the belt embracing him and the tree so as to be horizontal. He then plants his hands firmly against the stem, and a foot, or a foot and a half, below the belt. By now leaning back, and tightening the body-belt, he divides his weight between it and his arms, so as entirely to relieve the foot-strap of all strain. The legs are next drawn up quickly, till the foot-strap lies across the second notch. The climber now removes his hands from the tree, and grasps the body-belt, which becomes quite slack on his throwing his body forward till it almost touches the stem—his whole weight meanwhile resting on the foot-strap. By a sudden movement he then jerks the slackened belt about a foot and a half further up the tree. After this he once more rests his hands on the stem, relieves his feet of the weight, and draws them up as before till the next notch receives the foot-strap; and so on till he reaches the top. He carries along with him an earthen pot slung round his neck, and a huge knife at his girdle. With this he cuts away the young sprouts, and draws off the toddy, which appears to be the sap intended by nature to form the fruit. When freshly taken from the tree, in the cool of the morning, it forms a delicious drink, not unlike whey in appearance, with a slightly acid taste, and a pleasant sweetness, as well as a sharpness or briskness not very dissimilar to that of ginger-beer, only more racy and peculiar in its flavour. When allowed to stand for some hours, it ferments, and resolves itself into a liquor somewhat intoxicating, as I had often occasion to discover afterwards in India to my sorrow, not precisely in my own case, but in that of many a boat's crew, who (plague take them!) when once they get the fascinating toddy-pot to their heads, seldom let it down while a drop remains.

I cannot describe the capital of Johanna with any hope of conveying a just notion of its burlesque fortifications, which a jollyboat's crew could readily escalade and take possession of, with no better arms than their stretchers. The houses are built of rude lumps of lava, and the streets run so narrow, that three persons find it rather inconvenient to walk side by side. The dwellings, as we could easily discover by standing on tip-toe, are all flat-topped, and not a single one did we see with a window in it. The entrance is by a small door leading from the street to a square court, on one side of which is a broad rude portico conducting to the lower rooms, which are as dark and gloomy as need be. The floors are of mud, with appropriate walls of naked masonry, and here and there a bamboo sofa. Over some of these huts are rigged light, open balconies, or galleries, which must be agreeable enough in the

cooler periods of the day. These are the mansions of the upper classes, the titled aristocracy of Johanna. The democracy, that is, the slaves, arrange matters with more convenience, taste, and comfort than their masters, although their huts, or hovels, are much smaller. These unpretending abodes are disposed in neat little squares round the stone buildings, and made chiefly of branches of the cocoa-nut tree, after the following fashion. Several stakes are first driven into the ground, at the distance of five or six feet from one another, and of the height to which it is intended to carry the walls, say six or eight feet. Between each pair of these posts there are then placed two or three of the long, feather-like branches of the cocoa-nut, with their centre-parts, or that from which the leaves spring, upright. These leaves, which grow at right angles from the centre of the branch to the length of four or five feet, are then wattled, or, more properly speaking, plaited together into a kind of mat. As this is done with considerable care, the appearance of these walls is remarkably striking, perhaps from being so perfectly symmetrical, a circumstance almost invariably productive of a pleasing effect in architecture, whatever be the materials out of which the combination is formed. The texture of these verdant walls, of course, is not quite close, openings being purposely left sufficiently wide to admit both light and air, although, it is said, the natives can weave their materials so closely as even to exclude wet. The roofs of these simple dwelling-places are thatched with plantain-leaves intermixed with reeds, and fastened down by a very long kind of grass, growing everywhere on the island in great luxuriance. The entrance is by a space left blank in the work, generally about three feet high by two wide; and in lieu of a door, a prickly-pear-bush answers the purpose not amiss. Two or three of the principal inhabitants, however, did sport a door of basket-work; but this was evidently a luxury beyond the taste or the means of the society at large. The interior of these huts is divided into two compartments; the inner one, being the chief room, contains a sofa made of bamboo, with cocoa-nut leaves laced tightly across it. In the outer chamber the natives cook their calavances and wild-peas. The principal squares in the fashionable part of the town measured from seven to eight paces across; and as we entered two or three of them, one after the other, we were received by such uproarious squallings and bawlings of multitudes of children, that we were fain to back out again more speedily than we entered. I need scarcely mention, that while the grown-up portion of the community at Johanna content themselves with less than a square yard of clothing a-piece on an average, the small fry are left pretty much as they came into the world. Generally speaking, these urchins are hugely pot-bellied, and not very pretty, nor are any of them so graceful or well-formed as most of their seniors.

I fell into conversation at one place with a half-blind little body of a granny, nursing, or pretending to nurse, a very small jet-black child. Upon my asking her some question, which she did not understand, she held out the infant, and begged me to take hold of it, that I might see how pretty it was, apparently cheapening her goods. I had no thought of becoming a purchaser, but could not altogether refuse this soft appeal, and having taken the frog of a thing in one hand, held it out at arm's length, as I might have done a blacking-brush, which, in fact, it resembled not a little in size and colour. The house was in the same Lilliputian style, being exactly four feet high by seven square; nor do I immediately remember to have seen a less comfortable human dwelling-place, except, perhaps, in some remote parts of a dear little Green Island, not quite so far off as the Mozambique, but which shall be nameless.

Having satisfied ourselves with this domiciliary visit to the suburbs, which are inhabited entirely, as it appeared, by the negro or slave part of the population, we requested our guide, who was called Mahomet, to conduct us to the king's palace. We had engaged this fellow as our cicerone, partly from his name, so classical in oriental story, and partly from his bearing in his hand a most official-like rod, painted red, which he assured us was a symbol of authority. It did not prove sufficient, however, to gain for us the immediate audience we desired with his majesty of Johanna. His influence carried us no farther than the waiting-room, a little square apartment, resembling exceedingly a small, over-crowded dog-kennel. The heat soon became intolerable, in spite of the exertions of sundry attendants, who fanned the company with broad dry leaves of a huge palm, the name of which we did not know, but, if I mistake not, it is the talipot of Ceylon. At length, we were actually forced to seek refuge in the open air from a temperature somewhat above 100°, until the monarch should be ready to see us, and, under Mahomet's directions, we proceeded to the mosque, the first I had ever seen in my life.

Not to slander this building, it looked marvellously like a poultry-roost, with a pigeon-house steeple erected over it, open on all sides but one, and shaded by a piazza. Objections were made to our entrance, but the glitter of a small silver coin broke down the laws of the Prophet, if, indeed, there be any law against the entrance of Christians, which I believe there is not. At all events, we entered the mosque, after pulling off our shoes, at the desire of the priest; for while the English uncover their heads on entering a church, the Mahometans bare their feet. But we suffered no inconvenience, for the floor was laid with soft and clean mats. At the inner end stood the altar, or what we took to be such, a low sort of open box, rudely fashioned into Gothic cuspings at top. Various oriental manuscripts lay about, and I observed, with great interest, some of the identical inscriptions in Arabic characters described by Sir William Jones, in his account of Johanna, as extracts, I think, from the Alcoran. The pleasure which this great Eastern scholar experienced, and has so well described, on first meeting with these writings, and being able to interpret them on their native spot, must have been very great. I remember feeling something more or less akin to this, in a small way, on first seeing the St. Michael orange actually growing at the Azores; and still more when, long afterwards, a set of genuine tea-bushes were pointed out to me by a native Chinese in a field near Canton.

We next proceeded to our guide's house, where he introduced us, not indeed to his wives, for all these ladies were stowed away behind a screen of

mats, but to some of the males of his family, and, amongst others, to a queer copper-coloured gentleman, who styled himself, in his communications with us, 'the Duke of Devonshire,' and begged very hard to be allowed the honour of having our linen to wash. His grace was a little dumpy fellow, who stooped considerably, wore neither shoes nor stockings, and exhibited so little of a nose, that when you caught his countenance in profile, the facial line, as the physiognomists call it, suffered no interruption on being drawn from the brow to the lips. The poor duke little knew the cause of the laughter which his occupation, title, and the contrast of looks, excited in those of our party who had seen his grace's noble namesake in the opposite hemisphere.

Our host presented us with some cool toddy fresh from the tree, and mantling in a large pot, rudely fashioned from the shell of a cocoa-nut; after which, pretending to become a little bolder in our cups, we made an attempt to peep behind the envious screen which divided us from the ladies, whose loud tittering we heard from time to time. Our impertinence, however, was repaid, as it deserved, only by a glance at a most severe old hag, wisely placed in the front ranks, as a sort of gorgon shield to defend the more youthful damsels behind. The Mussulmen did not appear to relish our curiosity; but they were readily appeased by our ascribing the liberty we had taken to the effects of the potent beverage with which we had been entertained, and still more by our insisting upon paying a monopoly price for the toddy. Our host pocketed the affront and the cash with a glance towards the screen, and a laugh which seemed to imply, that for half the money we might have carried off the old lady herself.

It was now time to return to the palace; so we rose and stooped our way out of the door, glad indeed to get again into the clear and beautiful air of that celestial climate, and to behold, all round and above us, one of the richest, the most gorgeous landscapes that human eyes could wish to rest upon. It now appeared even more contrasted than before with man and all his works; indeed, our attention was often most painfully excited during the day's ramble to this sad want of keeping between the occupants and the scenery,

> "Where all save the spirit of man is divine."

The foliage, which, of course, varies in tint as the mountain rises, and as different kinds of vegetation succeed one another, extends in those latitudes, nearly in all its luxuriance, to the very top of the highest peaks, which are not less completely clad than the most sheltered glades or shelves of the low grounds, quite down to the water's edge. This feature of tropical islands, perhaps the most characteristic of any, is certainly amongst the most grateful to the eye of a stranger. At Madeira and the Azores, the vegetation is confined to a rich broad belt round the base; and even in the West Indies, the summits of the mountains are mostly barren.

The Island of Johanna, like Madeira and all other volcanic islands I am acquainted with, is indented, or cut downwards nearly from top to bottom by deep ravines, which are sharp, ridgy, and distinctly marked by lines of sunshine at the sides, but are generally lost in darkness in the middle parts, along which, in the rainy season, the torrents must dash in grand style. At the time of our visit to Johanna, we discovered only one stream, which aspired to none of the hurly-burly attributes of a mountain cataract, but tripped its sparkling and scarcely audible way pleasantly enough from ledge to ledge, from the distance, I dare say, of half a mile of perpendicular altitude, where its source was occasionally visited by a passing cloud. The lower end of this pretty stream was at length lost in silence in a winding flat shelf of ground, through which it gained the bay, after re-appearing and crossing a white sandy platform, or strip of level beach at the base of the hill. This flat belt forming the shore was thickly covered by a picturesque grove of cocoa-nut trees, growing quite close to one another.

After sauntering about the streets for some time, we fell in with the governor of the place, a fine-looking tall Arab, of a deep olive colour, unmixed with any touch of the fatal African hue—that melancholy and almost hopeless stain which is the cause of so much crime and so much misery in the world! His excellency had planted on his head, for the occasion, a huge white turban, and cast over his shoulders, not without grace, a splendid robe of scarlet, matching, as the ladies would say, rather comically with his worship's naked legs and feet. Our colloquy with this worthy functionary was cut short by a summons from the king; and as our desire to see his majesty had been rather increased than diminished by an acquaintance with his subjects, we lost not a moment in presenting ourselves.

The palace, which might have been stowed away in a moderate-sized breakfast-parlour, was built as nearly in the form of a ship as stones and mortar could be made to assume such unwonted shapes. The architects of the government, it seems, had vehemently resisted this strange whim, but the royal taste was not to be disputed; and strange work the poor builders of Johanna had made of it. The king, I suppose, was not quite satisfied with the result; for, in order to secure his point as to the imitation intended, which the masonry but feebly supplied, his majesty inserted a bowsprit at that end of the building which he meant for the head, and underneath ingeniously blocked out two round spaces as for hawse-holes for the cables; devices which, as good courtiers, we failed not to applaud as extremely natural and proper.

The court of Johanna, in spite of these fancies, has its etiquettes as well as that of palaces in other parts of the globe; and instead of our being ushered at once into the royal presence, we were told that the king, fatigued by the long audience he had given to the captain of the Volage, and to our passenger, Sir Evan Nepean, the governor of Bombay, had lain down, and was not, on any account, to be disturbed for twenty minutes. We held ourselves in some luck to get off so well; and, after a good deal of squeezing, we made our way, by the help of the lord chamberlain, whose paucity of dress we envied with all our souls, to a sort of antechamber up stairs, or rather up a ladder; for the room, had it belonged to any thing but a palace, might have passed for an honest cockloft. In a few minutes the great officers of state filled up the apartment to the edge

of the trap-door by which we had entered; and it soon became so hot and close, that the black hole at Calcutta occurred frequently to our thoughts. A remonstrance to our friend the red stick in waiting produced a slight relaxation, at the cost of much of our popularity; for the parties sent down the grand staircase could not, or would not, understand that we were likely to be suffocated.

These Orientals, however, like the Spaniards, even in their least courteous moments, seem never to forget the externals of good breeding; and we saw upon this occasion, some of us for the first time, the graceful salam of the East. It is performed by bringing the fingers of the open right hand to the forehead, while in the act of bowing. I have observed in India, when a peculiar degree of respect is to be shown, that the person making the salam first touches the ground with his hand, and then brings it to his brow; thereby intimating, as I conceive, that he has virtually performed an act of prostration. And surely no one who has witnessed that humiliating ceremony, without any such conventional qualification, will deny that this substitute is better than the genuine Cotow, as the Chinese call it, where the head is actually knocked on the ground.

Most of the natives of Johanna, even the negro slaves, talk a little English; but the best examples of persons possessed of such acquirements were found, where they ought to be, amongst the grandees of the island. The following is a fair specimen of the conversation of the dukes and earls at the capital of the Comoros.

"How do you do, sir? Very glad see you. D — n your eyes! Johanna man like English very much. God d—n! That very good? Eh? Devilish hot, sir! What news? Hope your ship stay too long while, very. D—n my eye! Very fine day."

After which, in a sort of whisper, accompanied by a most insinuating smile, his lordship, or his grace, as the rank of the party might be, would add:

"You want orange? You want goat? Cheap! I got good, very. You send me your clothes; I wash with my own hand—clean! fine! very! I got everything, plenty, great, much! God d—n!" And then, as if to clench the favourable opinion which these eloquent appeals had made, the speaker was sure to produce a handful of certificates from mates of Indiamen, masters of Yankee brigs, and middies of men-of-war; some written in solemn earnest, some quizzically, though all declaring his lordship, the bearer, to be a pretty good washerman, but the sort of person not to be trusted far out of sight, as he would certainly walk off with your clothes-bag if he could safely do so.

We had exhausted most of the topics, and all the English words of our friends of the fashionable world of Johanna, excepting the oaths, which their profligate visitors appear to have been particularly successful in sowing amongst them, when the king was graciously pleased to rise from his bamboo couch, and summon us to his presence. The audience-chamber might have measured twelve feet long and eight wide, with a window at one end, made to slope like the stern-post of a ship. Under the light sat the king, with his crown on his head; an appendage which, I must say, seems quite proper; and if it were always observed elsewhere, it would save many a bitter disappointment to children and nurses, as I can answer from actual experience in my own family, at the Tuileries, and elsewhere. But, in place of a sceptre in one hand, and a globe in the other, which he ought by rights also to have wielded, his majesty leaned both his hands on the hilt of a monstrous rusty sabre, or ship's cutlass, stuck perpendicularly between his legs, while his elbows rested on the sides of a clumsy, wooden arm-chair, exchanged probably with some master of a merchant-ship for a bullock or two. The crown was amazingly grand, being stuck round with stones, precious enough, I dare swear; and over all was thrown, not inelegantly, an Indian shawl, which dropped on either side nearly to the elastic bamboo floor, covered with ratan mats. Under the shawl we could observe a cumbersome black velvet robe, strangely ill cut, streaked across with gold lace, and garnished with a whole regiment of huge buttons. The folds of the robe concealed from our view the cut and quality of his majesty's small clothes; but certes he wore no covering below the knee, nor any thing on his feet, except a pair of sandals, consisting of a slip of deal, half an inch thick, tied to the great toe, and laced over the instep by small bands, made of the long grass of the island. This load of finery well nigh concealed a round, fat, good-humoured, elderly personage, whose countenance gave no great promise of intellect beyond what we had found amongst his subjects below stairs. With the instinctive readiness of high station, however, he gave the conversation a turn which interested his company, by asking us if we had ever seen an Arabic almanac. Upon our replying in the negative, and expressing the expected degree of curiosity, he drew forth a roll of papers from his chair, and read us the names of the months, giving to each what he doubtless considered an English translation. While I was enacting the good courtier by wondering at his majesty's knowledge of these subjects, he suddenly asked me in what constellation the sun then was? I had not the least idea, and felt rather put out to be asked such a question in full court; but his majesty kindly supplied my ignorance, by saying, with a triumphant air, "Sun now in Leo." Indeed, I suspect that I gratified him far more by leaving this exploit to him than if I had answered the question myself.

However this may be, his sable majesty followed up his question by asking me to make him a dial, saying that the only instrument of the kind he possessed gave him very little satisfactory information as to the hour of the day. I began to think I was in a second scrape; for, although I had some faint idea of the principles of dialling, I felt by no means up to the task of constructing such a thing on the spot, and without reference to books. A dial, however, was produced, and the poor king's inability to make it work was sufficiently explained by a note engraved on the plate, "Lat. 51½ N.;" whereas Johanna lies in 12½ S.! On my trying to explain this to him, he remarked, that when the question related to sun-dials, the discussion ought to be in the open air; so, after giving each of us a glass of cocoa-nut toddy, he adjourned the audience to the street. I suspect, however, that the king's chief object in making

this move was to call our attention to the beauty of his palace, and to expatiate on his own taste and skill in giving it a form as unlike any house in his dominions, or anywhere else, as it was possible to accomplish by means of such materials.

The truth is, that the Island of Johanna lies directly in the track of ships proceeding to India by the Mozambique Channel, and being rich in supplies of fruit, vegetables, and fresh meat, becomes an important place of call for ships on a long voyage. Almost every vessel passing that way gives the king something to keep him in a good humour. This precaution is quite necessary; for his authority is said to be so absolute, that he fixes the price of every article the moment a ship anchors in the bay. In general he goes on board to market for himself, when he is propitiated with a present of gunpowder, muskets, and pistols; or possibly he may be indulged in his fancy for an an old coat, or a pair of tarnished epaulettes. In short, nothing comes amiss to his majesty.

When we returned to the beach, after a famous scramble along the steep sides of the mountain, the bay exhibited a much more busy scene than when we left it in the morning. The ship was by this time completely clustered round with canoes, and her sides, hammock-nettings, and rigging, studded over with the natives, who clung to her as shell-fish fasten themselves to the roots of the mangrove in the rivers of India. Meanwhile, many hundreds of the negroes, accompanied by their wives and swarms of little round things, more like beetles and blackberries than children, were assembled in numerous chattering groups under the trees, by the side of great pyramids of all sorts of fruits, vegetables, eggs, and fish, which they were willing to sell for money, or to barter for knives, needles, looking-glasses, or trinkets of any kind. For a quarter of a mile along the shore there was such a jabbering, paddling, squalling, laughing, and bargaining, that we had trouble enough to force our way through the market to the beach. Even when we got afloat, there was scarcely room for the oars of our boat, so great was the crowd of native canoes. The ship, as we expected, was pretty nearly in possession of these merry folks, amongst whom we found some on the quarter-deck arrayed in tawdry finery almost as grandly as their king, being togged out with old gorgets and epaulettes, remnants of lace, heaps of buttons, and all kinds of odds and ends which they had purchased from the ships sweeping through their channel on the way to India.

As long as it was daylight, nothing short of force would have cleared our decks; but as the night fell, the natives gradually paddled away. Many of them, indeed, having lost sight of the canoes which brought them from the shore, made their salam to us, and tumbled themselves overboard, with as much unconcern as if they had been natives of the sea, and never touched the firm land all their lives. By the time it was quite dark, every native had left us; and, though we could still hear a slight murmur along the beach, and discover a fire here and there under the trees, it was evident the great mass of the population, which had been assembled during the day from all parts of the island, had returned to sleep in their own villages.

As soon as the first air of the damp land-wind breathed faintly off to us from the side of the mountain, we quietly tripped our anchor, sheeted home the sails, and glided, probably quite unperceived, out of the bay. Long before the next morning dawned, we were twenty leagues to the northward of the island, spinning away towards India before a fresh south-wester.

On Sunday, the 2d of August, we re-crossed the equator, and once more entered the northern hemisphere. On the 11th we made the coast of India; and next day, the 12th of August, 1812, anchored in the magnificent harbour of Bombay.

CHAPTER XVII.

SUGGESTIONS TOWARDS DIMINISHING THE NUMBER AND SEVERITY OF NAVAL PUNISHMENTS.

I TRUST that most of my brother-officers who have commanded ships can lay their hands upon their hearts and conscientiously declare they have never inflicted an unjust punishment. I can only confess, with much sorrow, that I, unfortunately, am not of that number. But as mere regret on such occasions contributes nothing towards remedying the evils committed, I have long employed my thoughts in devising some plan which might lessen the number of punishments at sea, and thus, perhaps, save others from the remorse I have felt, while it might tend to relieve the service from the discredit of an improper degree of severity in its penal administration.

I have already discussed at length, in another work, the nature of military and naval punishments, and endeavoured to establish one or two leading points in this ungracious but very important question*. It is not my purpose at present to resume that branch of the inquiry which relates to the fittest description of punishment, or that which, under all the varied circumstances of each case, produces the necessary degree of order at the smallest expense of human suffering. This, unquestionably, must be the problem which every right-minded officer will employ his best exertions to solve; and I shall be truly happy if the attention I have bestowed upon the subject is found to assist these laudable endeavours to lessen an evil which, as long as human nature continues the same, cannot be altogether removed.

Before proceeding to the main point under consideration, the diminution of the number and the degree of punishments on board ship, I must entreat officers not to mislead themselves, or to allow themselves to be misled by others, into the very mischievous fallacy of supposing that any one of all the various substitutes which have yet been proposed for corporal punishment are one whit less severe, or in point of fact less deserving of that character, than the method which has been so long established. It is well known to officers of most experience, that this powerful engine of discipline may, under proper regulations, be rendered not only the most effective, but essentially the most lenient, and when duly reported and checked, far more likely to contribute to the peace and comfort of the men themselves, than any of the specious but flimsy substitutes alluded to. This,

* Travels in the United States, vol. iii. chap. 5.

however, will hold good only when the present system is brought under a course of rigid arrangements, calculated to correct the evils that, in former times, were but too justly complained of, every one of which, it is of the greatest importance to remark, is much more likely to occur in the proposed substitutes than under the present method of chastisement. Solitary confinement, for example, I take to be one of the most cruel, and, generally speaking, one of the most unjust of all punishments; for it is incapable of being correctly measured, and it almost always renders the offender worse. It is apt, also, to protract his sufferings far beyond all required bounds, while it not only prompts him, and gives him time to brood over his most revengeful purposes, but irritates him against his officers and his duty, degrades him in his own eyes, and, if long continued, almost inevitably leads to insanity and suicide. Even if it be not extended so far as to bring his mind to this pitch of despair, every hour of such confinement is so far a step towards that dreadful consummation. All the beneficial effects of example, likewise, are necessarily lost; because the solitary culprit's sufferings, horrible though they no doubt are, never meet the eye of the rest of the crew, nor, indeed, can they ever be truly made known to them; and if the wretch himself have any vigour of mind left when he quits his cell, he will naturally, when speaking to his companions, make light of his confinement. But not one man in a thousand, even of our hardiest spirits, can maintain this air of indifference at the gangway. And although it must be admitted that a man, at such moments, can feel no great kindness to his officer, the transient nature of the punishment, compared to the prolonged misery of solitary confinement, leaves no time for discontent to rankle. I never once knew, nor ever heard of an instance in which a corporal punishment, administered calmly and with strict regard to justice and established usage, was followed by any permanent ill-will resting on the mind of a sailor, either towards his captain or towards the service.

It happened to me once, when in command of a ship in the Pacific Ocean, to have occasion to punish a very good seaman. The offence was in some degree a doubtful one, but, upon the whole, I felt it my duty to correct it rather sharply. On mature reflection, however, I began to suspect I had done wrong; and on joining the commander-in-chief, some weeks afterwards, I laid all the circumstances of the case before him, and begged him to tell me fairly what he thought. He examined the details minutely, cross-questioned me about them, and, after some deliberation, said, that although I had the letter of the law with me, I had acted hastily, which in this instance was acting unjustly; for had I waited a little, the true bearings of the case must, he thought, have made themselves apparent. This judgment of Sir Thomas Hardy (one of the soundest-headed and best-hearted men in the whole Navy) squared but too well with my own feelings upon the matter, and doubled the shame I was already suffering under. From that hour to this, I have never ceased to catch with eagerness at any suggestion which I thought might contribute to save deserving men from a similar misfortune, and well-disposed officers from the fatal errors of precipitancy. A little incident has perhaps had its effect in quickening these speculative ideas into a practical shape.

Several years after the period alluded to, I happened to be sailing about Spithead in a gentleman's yacht, when a man-of-war's cutter came alongside. As no officer had been sent in the boat, the message was delivered by the coxswain, whom I did not recognise as an old shipmate till he came to me aft, took off his hat, and held out his hand. I then recollected the face of the seaman I had unjustly punished! To all appearance he had entirely forgotten the circumstance: but the commodore's words, "You ought to have let that man off," rang in my ears, and my heart smote me as I felt the honest fellow's grasp. "I shall never rest," I afterwards vowed to myself, "till I have succeeded in suggesting some regulations which, as far as possible, shall prevent other officers from falling into the same error."

It seems to be now generally admitted by all who have attended to the subject, that ever since the period when it became the duty of captains to make periodical reports to the Admiralty of the corporal punishments inflicted, those punishments have gradually decreased. Meanwhile the discipline has gone on improving; and therefore it becomes a matter of much practical importance to investigate the true bearings of a measure by which such invaluable results have been brought about. This is not a question of mere curiosity; but has for its object to discover whether some further extension of the same principles may not produce results equally satisfactory. It should never be forgotten, however, that there is an absolute necessity for maintaining the present strictness of our discipline, which is one of the most essential sources of naval success; and, next to the spirit of honour and patriotism which pervades the profession, it may be considered the very life-blood of that branch of our national strength. But there are two very different methods by which this vital object of exact discipline may be accomplished: one is the prevention, the other the punishment, of offences. Some officers have endeavoured to do away with corporal punishment altogether; and some, on the other hand, have had recourse to hardly anything else. The just union of the two systems will, I believe, in the end, perform the greatest public service, at the least cost of human suffering. Unfortunately, there exists at first sight (but only at first sight) so great a degree of simplicity, promptitude, and practical efficiency, in the method of actual punishment, compared with the patient and almost unseen method of prevention, that too many officers, especially amongst those who are inexperienced, prefer the more severe and energetic, to the less obvious, but eventually far more effectual resource of vigilance beforehand.

In his cooler moments, it is very true, almost every officer, of whatever age or standing in the service, is ready to admit the truth of the common-place maxim, that it is better to prevent crimes than to punish them. But this verbal sort of admission will generally go for nothing at the moment of need, unless there be some practical, I had almost said mechanical, check interposed between the excitement of passion, and the dangerous facility of giving vent to that excitement, in the irrevocable and always too ready

shape of bodily chastisement. Accordingly, it is, perhaps, not too much to say, that there are few much-employed officers who can look back to the punishments they have ordered, without feeling that, in some instances, it might possibly have been better for all parties concerned, had there existed in those days some official warning which they could not disregard, of such a nature as to produce deliberate reflection, before it was too late.

Antecedent to June 1811, the date of the order by which officers in command of ships were required to send quarterly returns of punishments to the Admiralty, there was little or no restraint upon the despotic authority of the captain, as far, at least, as corporal punishments were concerned. And it must be in the recollection of every one who served in those days, that captains, not really cruel by nature, nor more intemperate than the ordinary run of men, were sometimes led, by the mere indulgence of unlimited and unscrutinised authority, to use a degree of severity not only out of proper measure with the crime, but, by reason of its questionable justice, hurtful to the discipline of the ships, and to the general character of the service.

Such things may also possibly have happened even of late years; but, certainly, in practice they have been much less frequent. The reason is twofold: in the first place, no person, whatever be his nature or his station in life, can be indifferent to the character he holds, either in the eyes of his employers, or in those of the public; and this is peculiarly the case when the question turns upon human suffering. In the next place, the proper authorities to whom the quarterly reports are made, if they see anything in these returns which looks like undue severity, may, and actually do, take immediate measures to prevent its recurrence. It has thus become the professional interest, and, in point of fact, also the sincere desire of most officers in command of ships, to keep down their list of punishments as much as possible.

No Admiralty regulations, nor any other artificial device that ever was thought of, can convert a hot-headed captain into a cool, experienced, or reflecting person. Nevertheless, it does seem to be quite within the legitimate range of official power, to compel all intemperate officers, whether young or old, to behave, as far as their nature will allow, in the same manner as men of sense, feeling, and thorough knowledge of the service, would act in like circumstances.

It is a rule, now very generally observed by the best authorities in the Navy, never to punish a man on the day the offence has been committed. And experience having shown the wisdom of this delay, there seems no reason why so simple a rule, one which the most experienced, sober-minded, and intelligent officers have discovered to be highly beneficial in practice, and have voluntarily imposed on themselves, should not be established imperatively upon every captain without exception.

It is important, in discussing the subject of naval discipline, to recollect under what peculiar and trying circumstances the captain of a man-of-war is placed, and how much he stands in need not only of every assistance that can possibly be afforded to guide his judgment, but of every artificial check that can be devised to control his temper.

As he is charged with the sole executive government of the community over which he presides, he is called upon to exercise many of the legislative, as well as the judicial functions of his little kingdom. Having made laws in the first instance, he has to act the part of a judge in the interpretation of those laws; while, in the very next instant, he may stand in the place of a jury to determine the facts of the case, and of a counsel to cross-question the witnesses. To this strange jumble of offices is finally added the fearful tasks of allotting the punishment, and seeing it carried into effect! If ever there was a situation in the world, therefore, requiring all the aids of deliberation, and especially of that sobriety of thought which a night's rest can alone bestow, it is surely in the case of a captain of a man-of-war. And if this rule has been found a good one, even by prudent and experienced officers, who, it appears, never trust themselves to punish a man without twenty-four hours' delay at least, how much more important might not such a regulation prove, if less discreet persons were compelled to adopt invariably a similar course of deliberation? Nor does it appear probable, that, in the whole complicated range of the service, cases will often occur when its true interests may not be better answered by punishments inflicted after such delay, than if the reality or the semblance of passion, or even the slightest suspicion of anger, were allowed to interfere with the purity of naval justice. It is so difficult, indeed, to detach the appearance of vindictive warmth from punishments which are made to follow quickly after the offence, that in all such cases there is great danger incurred of inflicting much pain to little or no purpose.

In the first place, therefore, I consider it might be very advantageously established, by a positive order from the Admiralty, that one whole day, or twenty-four hours complete, should, in every instance, be allowed to elapse between the investigation of an offence, and the infliction of the punishment which it may be thought to deserve. It ought by no means to be reckoned enough that twenty-four hours have passed since the offence has been committed; the interval in question, to be of much use, should take its date from the time the circumstances of the case have been inquired into by the captain himself. The reason of this limitation will be apparent, if it be recollected that the moment at which the officer's anger, indignation, excitement, (call it by what name we will,) is likely to be the greatest, is when he first becomes acquainted with the details of the offender's misconduct. Unfortunately, however, it is generally at that instant when of all others he is least in a condition to pronounce a cool judgment, that the captain's decision is made as to what shall be the amount of punishment. And if the execution of the sentence follows close upon the heels of the investigation, the injustice, if there happen to be any, may be irrevocably committed, long before the case can have received adequate consideration.

In order still further to circumscribe the chances of passion interfering with the judgment, not only of the captain, but of the officer who

makes the complaint, as well as the witnesses and other parties concerned, I think it should be directed, that all offences whatsoever are to be inquired into between nine o'clock in the morning and noon. This is perhaps the only period in the whole day perfectly free from suspicion as to the influence of those exciting causes which, as we all know, tend materially to warp the judgment, even of the wisest and best men. The ship's company, it must be recollected, take their dinner and grog at mid-day, and the officers dine soon after. To those who have witnessed in old times the investigation and punishment of offences immediately after the cabin dinner, the importance of this regulation will require no further argument. At any other period of the day, except that above specified (between nine o'clock and noon), the irritation caused by fatigue, hunger, or repletion, is so apt to interfere with the temper, and consequently with the judgment, that it should never be chosen for so delicate an affair as an inquiry into details which may be followed by so dreadful a consequence as corporal punishment.

It is undoubtedly true, that the essential characteristics of naval discipline are now, and ought always to be, promptitude of action, and that vigorous kind of decision which leads to certainty of purpose at all times, and under all circumstances that can possibly arise. But these very qualities, which constitute the sinews of strict discipline, are manifestly of no permanent value, and cannot be calculated upon at moments of difficulty and danger, unless they are regulated by justice, and made to form parts of an established system of usage at once uniform in itself, and intelligible to every one on board.

In civil life, no man of sense or discretion thinks of adopting any measure of consequence without first consulting his pillow; and there seems no good reason, that I can see, for supposing that what is proverbially useful in one situation should be less true to our nature, under similar circumstances, in another.

If indeed it be thought by any one, that the punishment of a seaman at the gangway is not an affair of such consequence as to require all this systematic deliberation, the whole of the present discussion falls to the ground. But by most persons it will certainly continue to be considered a matter of high importance, both to the character and to the real efficiency of the naval service, that not one single lash should be given in the course of a year more than is absolutely necessary for the maintenance of strict discipline. Without this, a man-of-war would very soon become worse than useless to the country, besides being what a 'slack ship' has been emphatically termed, 'a perfect hell afloat!'

Independently of every such consideration, it is assuredly most desirable to establish throughout the fleet the conviction, that, although the punishment of flogging, which has prevailed for so long a time, cannot possibly be discontinued, it shall be exercised with the least possible severity. It is difficult to estimate how essentially this conviction, if once fixed in the minds of the seamen, and guaranteed, as I think it might be, in a great measure, by a very simple Admiralty regulation, would contribute to extend the popularity of the naval service throughout the country.

There are some minor details, in addition to the above suggestions, which it may be useful to consider in connexion with them. All punishments should take place between the hours of nine in the morning and noon, for the reasons hinted at above, in the recommendation to select that period of the day for the investigation of offences. If possible, also, not more than one day should be allowed to elapse after the inquiry; for, although there is always something like passion in a punishment which is too prompt, there may, on the other hand, frequently appear something akin to vindictiveness in one which has been delayed until the details of the offence are well nigh forgotten.

It seems likewise very material that the captain should avoid pronouncing, either during or immediately after the investigation of an offence, any declaration whatever of his intentions as to the measure of punishment he means to order. It is, indeed, the very object of the proposed regulations to afford time for cool reflection; and much of their benefit would be destroyed if the captain were to commit himself by threats made in the moment of greatest irritation. If he were a weak man, he might be apt (merely to preserve an appearance of consistency) to follow up, when cool, a threat made in anger, but of the propriety of which he was no longer convinced. Or even admitting that he possessed great strength of character, or that his sense of justice overcame his fears of any such imputation, still, in such cases of vacillation, there must inevitably be more or less injury done to good discipline, by a public display of infirmity of purpose on the part of the highest authority on board.

I could relate many instances of injustice arising from precipitancy in awarding punishment, and of the beneficial effects of systematically deferring to pronounce sentence till the heat of the moment had passed; but the following anecdotes, for the accuracy of which I can vouch, seem sufficient to arrest the attention to good purpose.

Two men-of-war happened to be cruising in company: one of them a line-of-battle ship, bearing an admiral's flag; the other a small frigate. One day, when they were sailing quite close to each other, the signal was made from the large to the small ship to chase in a particular direction, implying that a strange sail was seen in that quarter. The look-out man at the maintop-mast-head of the frigate was instantly called down by the captain, and severely punished on the spot, for not having discovered and reported the stranger before the flag-ship had made the signal to chase.

The unhappy sufferer, who was a very young hand, unaccustomed to be aloft, had merely taken his turn at the mast-head with the rest of the ship's company, and could give no explanation of his apparent neglect. Before it was too late, however, the officer of the watch ventured to suggest to the captain, that possibly the difference of height between the masts of the two ships might have enabled the look-out man on board the admiral to discover the stranger, when it was physically impossible, owing to the curvature of the earth, that she could have been seen on board the frigate. No attention, however, was paid to this remark, and a punishment due only to

crime, or to a manifest breach of discipline, was inflicted.

The very next day, the same officer whose remonstrance had proved so ineffectual, saw the look-out man at the flag-ship's mast-head again pointing out a strange sail. The frigate chanced to be placed nearly in the direction indicated; consequently she must have been somewhat nearer to the stranger than the line-of-battle ship was. But the man stationed at the frigate's mast-head declared he could distinguish nothing of any stranger. Upon which the officer of the watch sent up the captain of the main-top, an experienced and quick-sighted seaman, who, having for some minutes looked in vain in every direction, asserted positively that there was nothing in sight from that elevation. It was thus rendered certain, or at all events highly probable, that the precipitate sentence of the day before had been unjust; for, under circumstances precisely similar (or even less favourable), it appeared that the poor fellow could not by possibility have seen the stranger, for not first detecting which he was punished!

I must give the conclusion of this painful story in the words of my informant, the officer of the deck, one of the kindest, and bravest, and best of men. "I reported all this to the captain of the ship, and watched the effect. He seemed on the point of acknowledging that his heart smote him; but pride prevailed, and it was barely an ejaculation that escaped. So much for angry feelings getting the better of judgment!"

I have seldom related this anecdote in any company, without observing that it drew forth from those who listened to it a marked and unqualified expression of censure. And the case, I admit, is a very strong one. But before we condemn without mercy the object of our indignation, I would venture to ask, which man amongst us all, whether at sea in the command of a ship, or on shore at the head of a regiment, or in the sober management of a mercantile house, or even in the tranquil jog-trot of a family in the most private station of life, can honestly and fearlessly say that he has never, in moments of haste, been guilty of acts, if not quite so severe, at least as unjust? I have already admitted that I myself am not of this fortunate number; and I may therefore be permitted to urge upon others the necessity of interposing as many artificial checks as possible upon the excitements of passion.

In the mean time, the following anecdote will help to relieve the disagreeable impression caused by the incident just related, without obliterating the salutary reflections which it seems calculated to trace on the mind of every well-disposed officer.

Three sailors, belonging to the watering-party of a man-of-war on a foreign station, were discovered by their officer to have strayed from the well at which the casks had been filled. These men, it appears, instead of assisting in rolling the heavy butts and puncheons across the sand, preferred indulging themselves in a glass of a most insidious tipple, called Mistela in Spanish, but very naturally 'transmogrified' by the Jacks into Miss Taylor. The offenders being dragged out of the pulperia, were consigned, without inquiry, to the launch, though they had been absent only a few minutes, and were still fit enough for work. The officer of the boat, however, happening to be an iron-hearted disciplinarian, who overlooked nothing, and forgave no one, would not permit the men to rejoin the working party, or to touch a single cask; but when the boat returned to the ship, had the three offenders put in irons.

When these circumstances were reported to the captain in the course of the day, so much acrimony was imparted to his account by the officer, that the captain merely said, "I shall be glad if you will defer stating this matter more fully till to-morrow morning, after breakfast; take the night to think of it." To-morrow came, and the particulars being again detailed, even more strongly and pointedly, by the officer, the captain likewise became irritated, and under the influence of feelings highly excited had almost ordered the men up for immediate punishment. Acting, however, upon a rule which he had for some time laid down, never to chastise any one against whom he felt particularly displeased without at least twenty-four hours' delay, he desired the matter to stand over till the following morning.

In the mean time, the men in confinement, knowing that their offence was a very slight one, and feeling that it had been caused very much by the neglect of the petty officers of the watering party, laid their heads together, and contrived, by the aid of the purser's steward, to pen a supplicatory epistle to the captain. This document was conveyed to its destination by his servant, a judicious fellow, who happened to have heard amongst the people on the lower deck that the case was really a hard one. Though it proved no easy matter to decipher the hieroglyphics written by the prisoners under the dingy light of a purser's tallow glim, it appeared evident that there must have occurred several extenuating circumstances in their history which had not been brought forward before. The only remark, however, which the captain made was, that the letter ought not to have been brought to him; and that his servant was quite out of order, in being accessory to any proceeding so irregular.

The steward took the hint, and recommended the prisoners to appeal to the complaining officer. Accordingly, next day, when the captain went on deck, that person came up and said,

"I have received a strange letter, sir, from these three fellows whom I complained of yesterday; but what they say does not alter my opinion in the least."

"It does mine, however," observed the captain, after he had spelled through it, as if for the first time.

"Indeed, sir!" exclaimed the other; adding, "I hope you won't let them off on this account."

"I tell you what it is," quietly remarked the captain, "I would much rather you let them off than that I should; for it strikes me, that all the useful ends of discipline will be much better served, and your hands, as well as mine, more essentially strengthened, by your taking the initiative in this business instead of me. My advice to you, therefore, is, that when I go below you send for the men, and say to them you have read their statement, and that, although it does by no means excuse, it certainly explains, and so far extenuates, their offence, that you feel disposed

to try what your influence with the captain can do to get them off altogether."

"I do not see the force of your reasoning," answered the offended officer; "nor can I conscientiously trifle with the service in the manner proposed. I thought at first, and I still think, that these men ought to be punished; and, as far as I am concerned, they shall certainly not escape."

"Well, well," cried the captain, "you will not, I hope, deny that I am the best judge of what is right and fitting to be done on board this ship; and I tell you again, that I consider the discipline will be better served by your being the mover in this case, than by my taking the affair, as you wish me to do, entirely out of your hands. Will you do as I suggest?"

"I beg your pardon, sir, but really I cannot, consistently with my sense of duty, adopt the course you propose. I think it right to insist, as far as I can with propriety, on these men being punished."

"Turn the hands up for punishment, then!" said the captain, to the first lieutenant, who had been walking on the other side of the deck during this colloquy; "and let the three prisoners be brought on deck."

The gratings were soon rigged under the mizen-stay—the quarter-masters placed with their seizings on either side—the boatswain and his mates (with the terrible weapons of naval law barely concealed under their jackets) arranged themselves in a group round the mast—while the marines, with fixed bayonets and shouldered arms, formed across the quarter-deck; and the ship's company, standing in two double rows, lined the sides of the deck. Not the slightest sound could be heard; and a person coming on deck blindfolded might have thought the ship lay in dock, without a soul on board.

In the middle of the open space before the hatchway stood the three wretched culprits, with their hats off, and their eyes cast down in hopeless despair; but, to all outward appearance, firm and unmoved, as became men whose duty and habit it is to face every danger, sorrow, and hardship, without flinching.

When all was declared ready, the first lieutenant descended to the cabin, but returned again almost immediately, followed closely by the captain, in his cocked hat and sword, grasping in one hand the well-known roll of paper containing the articles of war, and in the other the master-at-arms' report of prisoners. Every head was uncovered at his appearance; and as he lifted his hat in answer to this salute, he laid it on the capstan, against which he leaned while reading the article under which the delinquents had fallen.

"Now," said he, addressing the three prisoners, "you have been found guilty of an offence against the good order and discipline of this ship, which cannot be permitted, and which must positively be put a stop to. Heretofore it has not occurred, and I trust this will be the last case. Do you admit that you deserve punishment?"

No answer.

"Have you anything to advance why you should not be punished?"

The fellows nodged one another, scraped the deck with their feet, fumbled with their hats and waistbands, and muttered something about "a letter they had written to the officer what reported them."

"Letter!" exclaimed the captain; "let me see it."

The epistle being handed to the captain, he read it aloud to the assembled ship's company, who listened with all their ears. At the conclusion, he folded it up, and, turning to the officer, asked,

"What have you to say to this?"

"Nothing, sir—nothing," was the obdurate reply.

"Well now, my lads," observed the captain to the crew, after a pause of several minutes, "I shall give you a chance. These fellows appear, by their own confession, to have done what they knew to be wrong; and accordingly, as you perceive, they have brought themselves close aboard of the gangway. It would serve them all perfectly right to give each of them a good sound punishment. But I am willing to hope, that if I forgive them on your account—that is to say, if I let them off in consideration of the good conduct of the ship's company, and in confidence of your all behaving well in future—they will be quite as much disposed to exert themselves to recover their characters, as if they had tasted the bitterness of the gangway: at all events, I'll try them and you for once. Pipe down!"

It is only necessary to state further, that for nearly a year afterwards there occurred no instance of drunkenness or neglect at the watering parties.

Nothing is more hopeless, of course, than to expect that impetuous or unreasonable officers, whether old or young, will be brought, by any system of rules, to impose at all times the proper degree of restraint upon these expressions of their feelings, or that they will relinquish, without reluctance, any uncontrolled and prompt exercise of authority which they have been in the habit of wielding. But it is precisely this class of men whom it is most important to bring, by the sheer force of official power, into those habits of routine which the experience of wiser and better men has shown to be attended with real benefit to the service.

And here it may not be useless to remark, that these suggestions would scarcely, if at all, interfere with the regulations already established in ships commanded by officers of discretion and a right knowledge of their duty; while the restraints imposed could hardly fail to work a wholesome change in other ships not so fortunately circumstanced.

In order to prevent officers escaping from these obligations, there might be several additional columns added to the old printed form of Quarterly Returns of Punishments. One of these should give the day and hour of the investigation, followed by another showing the exact interval which had elapsed between the investigation and the punishment, to enable the commander-in-chief, or the Admiralty, to judge how far their orders, in this respect, had been duly attended to. It likewise might be well, perhaps, to insert in another column the name of the officer making the complaint. It has been found that no captain likes to send a long list of punishments; and, for

similar reasons, no officer subordinate to him would wish to have his name fixed to a numerous string of complaints. In both cases, the motive for making exertions to prevent offences would be encouraged. But every practical man knows, that when the sailors are well looked after, they always find it for their own interest and comfort to do their duty properly, and by falling into the ways of the ship avoid getting into scrapes. When once this desirable state of things comes about, punishments are always so rare that every art should be resorted to which shall have the effect of substituting a well-regulated, hearty superintendence on the part of the officers, in place of the painful alternative of the lash. If we can only make it the interest and pleasure of their superiors to set seriously about preventing offences, the seamen will be sure to meet the invitation more than half-way; and thus, while the whole system of discipline is improved, the punishments will become fewer and further between, the ships actually more efficient, the men and officers happier, and the whole service more popular.

There is one other point of importance in this discussion, and as it seems to possess a considerable analogy in its bearing to the suggestions already thrown out, it may possibly have greater weight in conjunction with them than if it were brought forward alone.

In every system of penal jurisprudence, whether civil or military, it seems to be of the first importance to let it be felt that the true degradation lies more in the crime itself, than in the expiatory punishment by which it is followed. Whenever this principle is not duly understood, punishments lose half their value, while they are often virtually augmented in severity. This is too well known to be further commented upon; but there is an extension of the principle, which, although not so generally recognised, appears to be fraught with much utility in its practical application to the intricate science of discipline.

The object of all punishments is evidently to prevent the recurrence of offences, either by others or by the offender himself. But it is not, by any means, duly considered, that in order to prevent the same person from repeating his crime, he ought to have a full and fair chance allowed him for virtue. If this be true (and it seems almost self-evident), a little further reflection will show that on every principle of justice, as well as of sound policy, the offender should be allowed to start afresh for his character from the very instant his punishment is over. If a man is never to have his offence or its chastisement forgotten, he can hardly be expected to set seriously about the re-establishment of his damaged reputation. For in time it must come about, that both he and his companions will naturally ascribe all the misfortunes of his situation rather to the nature of the punishment which is past than to their true cause, the degrading nature of the crimes he commits. If, while he is in this frame of mind, either the old offence or its punishment be cast in his teeth, the unhappy man cannot but feel that his officers are in a sort of league against him, and are determined to deny him a fair chance. He will next fancy, and not without reason, that every action of his life, however innocent or even meritorious, is liable to misconstruction from this eternal recollection of his past errors; and he will certainly be far less likely to draw proper distinctions between good and bad conduct, than if he were allowed to feel that all his actions were judged, as they ought in reason to be, exclusively upon their own proper merits.

Neither ought it to be forgotten, that a man so circumstanced has really stronger claims on our sympathy, and is more entitled to our protection, than if he had never fallen under censure. He has, in some sort, if not entirely, expiated his offence by the severity of its consequences; and every generous-minded officer must feel that a poor seaman whom he has been compelled, by a sense of duty, to punish at the gangway, instead of being kept down, has need of some extra assistance to place him even on the footing he occupied before he committed any offence. If this be not granted him, it is a mere mockery to say that he has any fair chance for virtue.

It might, therefore, I think, be very usefully made imperative upon the captain, at some short period after a punishment has taken place (say on the next muster-day), and when the immediate irritation shall have gone off, to call the offender publicly forward, and in the presence of the whole ship's company give him to understand that, as he had now received the punishment which, according to the rules of the service, his offence merited, both the one and the other were, from that time forward, to be entirely forgotten; and that he was now fully at liberty to begin his course anew. I can assert, from ample experience, that the beneficial effects of this practice are very great.

The propriety of extending this assurance of oblivion to those cases in which offences have been pardoned, is not quite so obvious at first sight. But when it is recollected, that the end of all discipline is to get the public work permanently well done, and that, in order to have it so performed, the men must be induced to set about their duty heartily, it will be seen, that the gracious rule of letting offences drop into oblivion applies with nearly equal force to this case as to one in which the crime has actually been punished. If a man have committed an offence which has brought him to the verge of such a formidable danger, it is far more likely that the lesson will be effectually engraven on his mind, if he be permitted to labour freely in a course of amendment, than if his redeeming exertions are eternally clogged by the ungenerous and unceasing recapitulation of his past errors. Some persons may call this not quite fair; but there seems little doubt, not only of the efficacy, but also of the popularity of such a regulation: for since it would certainly be received as a boon by the men, it might contribute materially to produce that habitual cheerfulness of spirits, which, after all, is probably the officer's best ally in the difficult and delicate task of disciplining his ship.

The following table is the form I should wish to propose for the quarterly returns of punishment. The columns marked with asterisks are new; the others belong to the form which was in use from June 1811 to November 1830, when a total change was made in the Admiralty regulations on this head.

A Return of Offences and Punishments on board H. M. S. ———, A. B., Captain, between the 1st of January, 184 , and the 31st of March, 184 .

No. on the Ship's Books.	Man's Name.	Quality.	Date of the Offence. * Day.	Hr.	Investigation. * Day.	* Hr.	Punishment. * Day.	Hr.	* Interval between the Investigation and the Punishment. Days	Hrs.	Particulars of the Offence.	Particulars of the Punishment. * Confinement.	* Disrating.	Corporal.	* Name of the Officer making the Complaint.	Remarks.

** This Form of the Quarterly Return of Punishments (with the exception of the columns marked with an asterisk (*), which it is proposed to add) was in force from 1811 to 1830.

By the orders in force subsequent to the 13th of November, 1830, no man can be punished without a regular warrant, under the captain's hand, detailing the offence, the nature of the evidence, and all the other circumstances which are necessary to form a judgment of the case. The good which has already followed the establishment of these regulations, I understand, is considerable; and I should certainly not have intruded these remarks on the notice of professional men, did there not appear to be room for improvements, tending, as I firmly believe, to ameliorate still further the discipline of Her Majesty's ships.

I live in confident hopes of seeing these suggestions enforced by the Admiralty; but in the mean time, there does not appear the smallest practical difficulty in adapting them to the regulations now in force. Any captain who agrees with me on this subject may advantageously, as I conceive, establish it as a rule in his ship, that the investigation of offences shall take place between nine o'clock and noon. He may likewise defer filling up and signing the required warrant till the day following that on which the case was examined into. He would thus be compelled to allow himself time to become cool, if, unfortunately, he were irritated at the period of the investigation; and if, happily, he were not so excited, or disturbed in his equanimity, on that most trying occasion, there would surely be no harm done by the delay. He would thus not only adhere closely to the letter of his instructions, but he would comply most decidedly with their spirit, which has for its express object the diminution of punishment, without risking the vigorous strictness of naval discipline.

Before dismissing a subject which possesses an uncommon degree of interest not only on board ship, but amongst all classes of the community on shore, I take leave respectfully but resolutely to claim for my brother-officers and for myself a title to be heard on such a point, in a spirit which is very seldom conceded to us.

When the general question of naval discipline is discussed in company, I have observed that most people are willing to admit that men who have been regularly brought up in the service, and have made the whole subject their study, may fairly be supposed to understand something respecting its details. They are listened to accordingly with attention, as long as the conversation keeps clear of corporal punishment. From the instant, however, that branch of the topic is touched upon, everything we say is treated with a degree of slight approaching to contempt, and we are often placed in the humiliating position of being considered persons who are so much parties concerned as to have a personal interest, or leaning towards the ungenerous and arbitrary side of the question. But I would appeal to any candid mind whether this be fair? and would ask, first, who of all men in the world have so direct an interest in lessening the severity of punishments, or in removing from them whatever is revolting to the best feelings of our nature, as the captains of Her Majesty's ships? Who is there, in short, in the whole country that can possibly have a more anxious desire to see the public duty carried on by mild instead of harsh measures, than the officers of the Navy? And in the next place, I ask whether it be fair that, with such immediate and strong motives constantly prompting us to investigate this matter fairly, we should be held up as the men least qualified to give a sound practical opinion upon a discussion so peculiarly technical?

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE DUTY OF CHEERFULNESS.

In the preceding chapter I have considered the advantages of establishing, by official authority, some direct and absolute check on the possible abuses in the exercise of one of the most difficult and delicate of an officer's duties. And although

I conceive much good may be effected by the precautions suggested, I cannot doubt that the same grand object might be still more effectually advanced by the due exercise of those moral checks which exist within every man's breast; and, above all, by the influence of habitual cheerfulness considered as a duty. So strongly, indeed, am I impressed with its importance as a branch of naval instruction, that I have taken some pains to arrange the views which have suggested themselves on this topic, and cast them into the shape of a lecture or discourse.

This address was never actually delivered; but as I should certainly not scruple, in the absence of a clergyman, to read such a discourse on board my own ship, I do not feel much hesitation in giving it a place in a work intended chiefly for the use of young nautical folks.

Most captains, I may remark in passing, merely read prayers to their ships' company on Sunday, while others complete their church service by a discourse borrowed from some standard authority. It is not very easy, indeed, to select one which shall be quite suitable to a congregation compounded of such curious materials as a man-of-war's crew; but it will hardly serve as an answer to this difficulty in selection, to say that seamen are too thoughtless to be seriously influenced by any sermon. This might prove rather too much, for in that case it were better altogether to avoid the mockery, which it would be. We must surely reason upon the supposition of the discourse having some effect; while it is obvious, that unless its meaning be clear to the apprehension of its hearers, and not unsuited to the peculiar circumstances in which they are placed, its tendency will often be to produce more harm than good. No congregation, either afloat or on land, ever come to church to make allowances for their preacher. On the contrary, they feel entitled to have large allowances made for their own deficiencies of knowledge, and to have the rough places of doctrine made plain, so that they may travel over them with safety to their conscience when the question is one of duty to God, and without offence to their earthly masters when it relates to the obligations of civil society. To make these two lines of spiritual and political obligation meet in the same point, is a problem which has exercised the talents of the wise and the good in all ages; but it may be pretty confidently asserted, that in every case where success has attended these beneficial efforts, the result has been brought about chiefly by a judicious adaptation of the appropriate machinery to the exact work of persuasion it was required to perform.

I have heard of commanders who ventured occasionally to compose a sermon for the edification of their crew. But this, it must be confessed, is very dangerous; for it is manifest, that no one who has not been regularly trained in theological studies, and made himself familiar with the difficult and complicated questions of Christian doctrine and evidences, can be sure of avoiding the innumerable risks always attendant upon partial knowledge. Were an officer, therefore, in the absence of a chaplain, frequently to venture upon the composition of discourses for the religious instruction of his crew, he would probably very soon bring the understanding of his congregation into about as great a state of confusion as that in which a clergyman would involve the ropes and sails were he to think of navigating the ship, without having gone through a course of nautical education. The difference, however, would lie in this: the ignorance of the clerical sailor might produce blunders only to be laughed at; or even if his ignorance and rashness sent the topmasts over the side, still the evil might not be irremediable, for the hull being still safe, fresh spars could soon be pointed, and all be again put in order. But in the case of the sailor assuming the temporary office of chaplain, his errors would afford no such laughing matter. The promulgation of erroneous doctrines and imperfectly explained principles, however good the intention, might slacken the shrouds of his hearers' faith; and thus they might lose not only their masts, but the whole ship, on the lee-shore of life, or founder in the wide ocean of doubt, before they suspected they had sprung a leak.

It was mainly in consequence of these and other misgivings, that the following fragments of a nautical discourse were never actually read on board ship. In its original state, it was intended as the first of a series of professional lectures, adapted to the capacity of naval seamen, in which moral obligations, official duties, and Christian principles, might be exhibited as identical in their origin, and all tending in their respective ways to insure the permanence and national utility of the wooden walls of Old England; those barriers of which it has been well remarked, that but for the inherent virtues which give them solidity, their physical strength would go for nothing.

It may, perhaps, be right to state, that what follows is merely the conclusion of the discourse. In the first portion, some useful doctrinal points were explained by the help of such nautical and scientific illustrations as seemed calculated to engage the attention of the different classes composing a sea congregation. But this, I was afraid, might be thought too presumptuous to publish, and I cancelled the sheets after they were printed.

Without, however, at present diving into such inquiries, it may be asserted that there are numberless symptoms, or practical tests, by which a true and hearty faith may be known: and there is perhaps none which is more unquestionable than the existence of that uniform sunshine of the breast which reflects the light of a good conscience upon all it turns to; I therefore made it the principal object of the address, to show in what manner the duty of cheerfulness might be rendered effectual in the practice of virtue, and the advancement of true piety.

The great Apostle St. Paul, as we have read in the lesson of this day, when in the most imminent danger of shipwreck, and at a moment when every other man on board appears to have lost heart, says boldly, 'And now I exhort you to be of good cheer, for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship;' for he saw that the dangers by which they were menaced had not only daunted the crew, but driven some of them into actual mutiny, or, which is the same thing, had induced them to think of deserting

with the boat, under pretence of wishing to lay out an anchor. The Apostle knew very well, by means of a supernatural communication during the night, that the ship would eventually be cast away, but that there would be no loss of any man's life amongst the crew or passengers. Although, of course, he had perfect reliance on this assurance of Divine assistance, and might hope to impart a similar confidence to the others, he was likewise well aware, that unless there should be an active exertion on his part, and the most energetic co-operation on that of the men, to give effect to their faith, the assistance would be withheld. When the cowardly shipmen, therefore, were about to quit the vessel (and here it may be remarked, that all deserters are mutineers and cowards), St. Paul ordered the centurion and the soldiers to 'let the boat fall off,' or, as we should now express it, to cut her adrift, after which there could be no further attempts to run away. But the Apostle also knew that much more was still to be done, or their lives would not be saved; and, accordingly, he very judiciously desired them to take meat, 'as it was for their health.' 'And when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and gave thanks to God in presence of them all; and when he had broken it, he began to eat.' He was a man of sufficient experience to know that it is not enough merely to tell men to be cheerful; he knew that it is always necessary in a leader to set an example; and this he appears to have done in a very considerate, and what, without any disrespect to this great Apostle, may be called an officer-like style. Nor was such conduct lost upon the other two hundred and seventy-five souls on board; for the interesting narrative goes on to say, 'Then they were all of good cheer, and they also took some meat.' I beg you to take notice, that by the influence of St. Paul's example and precepts, even the dastardly fellows who had proposed to run off with the boat, and leave the rest to their fate, were won back to the execution of their duty; for the words are, 'they were ALL of good cheer.' And so great appears to have been the influence of their inspired leader's sagacity, that ever afterwards, the crew, as well as his own people, worked under him with that hearty faith in his knowledge, and in his power to extricate them from their perils, which every practical man will perfectly understand was indispensable to their safety.

We may learn two lessons of importance from this narrative of holy writ. The doctrine of dependence, and its efficacy in quickening our faith into useful practice, are beautifully typified in St. Paul's conduct, and in the consequences which followed; while, on the other hand, we are taught to reflect upon the inestimable value of cheerfulness considered in the light of a duty. To this particular view of a subject, so copious that I hardly know where to begin or where to leave off, I shall now endeavour more particularly to draw your attention.

Cheerfulness may be considered in the threefold light of a duty to God, to our fellow-creatures, and to ourselves. These three obligations are not only consistent, but in many respects identical. In the last sense, or with peculiar reference to ourselves, cheerfulness, to speak quite correctly, is not so much a duty in itself, as the resulting impression left upon us by the right performance of our other duties. But when it is remembered that all these take their lively or their sombre character from our own conduct, and also that almost everything we do, or say, or think, or even feel, depends very much on the particular manner in which we choose to exercise our faculties, we shall return, by an easy circle, to the profitable conclusion, that all, or nearly all, our cheerfulness likewise depends essentially upon ourselves. Nothing stimulates men to useful action more effectually than being speedily rewarded; and if cheerfulness be the sure consequence of virtue, that alone is a high and certain recommendation for its habitual exercise. Nor, indeed, does it stop there; for this test may be said to give us an insight into the breast of others, and often to afford us practical means of discovering who are deserving of our confidence, and who are less worthy to be trusted. No one, indeed, can be permanently cheerful who does not otherwise discharge his duties; and I believe that few who do what they can to discharge all their duties will fail to be cheerful. A truly virtuous man may be distracted with doubts and difficulties, or his heart be wrung by domestic sorrow, or his body lacerated by pain, and yet, for all these woes, the spirit of cheerfulness may still pervade his whole character; and although it be not able, like the Spirit of God, to subdue all things to itself, it may essentially assuage the anguish of wounds far beyond the reach of physical relief, or indeed of any moral alleviation, but that which is derived from the fountain-head of all cheerfulness.

It is needless, however, to reason further in this abstract manner, when the topic is one which admits of the closest application to daily, I may say to hourly, practice. For it may be remarked, that the duty alluded to consists in the habitual observance of those obligations which experience has shown will make us cheerful, and chiefly in the vigorous subjection of all bad passions and emotions calculated to disturb our own serenity, or that of others. If avarice and selfish ambition, if animosity against our antagonists, envy towards our competitors, together with luxury and extravagance, be not kept in severe check, what chance have we for that peace of mind of which this enviable disposition is the indubitable symptom? If we have few desires, and these simple, moderate, and well within our means; if we are content with a consciousness of performing our own part in the scene of life to the best of our ability, without being solicitous over-much for the consequences; if we possess within us the spirit of true religion and genuine philosophy, which enables us to look on every reverse of fortune, or any other calamity, as a beneficial trial, and, as it were, an exercise of our virtue, we can hardly fail to be cheerful in almost all the contingencies of life.

I speak not now of mirth, which, as one of the most useful of writers, and most cheerful of men, well remarks, is 'like a flash of lightning that breaks through a gloom of clouds, and glitters for a moment; but of that cheerfulness which keeps up a kind of daylight in the mind, and fills it with a steady and perpetual serenity*.' It is of great consequence not to confound two qualities which may happen to be separated very far from one

* Addison, Spectator, No. 381.

another. Transient mirth may arise from the intoxication of good fortune, as it often does from the wild indulgence of intemperance. But the cheerfulness for which I am trying to claim your respect, is not an affair of a moment, or a mere laugh, or a shout; but a predominant expression of satisfaction with everything around.

If it be a virtue and a duty to have our minds so regulated, that, when occasions arise, we may cultivate all the innocent tastes and refined sensibilities of our nature, it follows that we must be habitually cheerful, otherwise many of the opportunities which the benevolent providence of God puts so constantly within our reach are carried past us. All men are sufficiently open to those higher excitements of mirth and joy which occur only occasionally; but these great emotions cannot often be produced, still less can they become a permanent part of our disposition. The professed jester is an intellectual drunkard, and his society not much less disagreeable than if intoxicating drugs had inspired his merriment. The instant such a man is deprived of his gaping audience, his flaming lamp goes out, and he is left in all the native dulness and darkness of his own shallow mind. On the other hand, true cheerfulness is suitable for every day and every hour, for company or for solitude, for labour or relaxation, for sickness or for health. It possesses also the important and distinguishing characteristic of being so admirably adapted to all occupations and to all times, that the transition from the gayest to the gravest avocations of life may be made by the happy man who enjoys it, not only without any abrupt shock, but with eminent advantage to his different pursuits.

If joy consist in the perception of those high objects of gratification which occur seldom, cheerfulness seems to be kept up or fed by a steady, abiding participation in the lesser, but more numerous and every-day causes of satisfaction, always at hand. As the power and goodness of Heaven are infinite in their extent, and infinite in their minuteness, to the mind cultivated as nature meant it to be, there is not only delight in contemplating the sublimity of the endless sea, or everlasting mountains, or the beauty of wide-extended landscapes, but there is a pleasure in looking at every flower and every little shell that God has made. Nature has scattered around us, on every side, and for every sense, an inexhaustible profusion of beauty and sweetness, if we will but perceive it. The pleasures we derive from flowers, from forms, from musical sounds, are surely not given us in vain; and if we are constantly alive to these, we can never be in want of subjects of agreeable contemplation, and must be habitually cheerful. All that is required, in order that we should duly estimate these things, is that we should not have blunted or exhausted our minds by excessive indulgence of gross appetites and passions. In that fatal case, all those delicious fruits turn to ashes. Indeed, the man who looks at the gifts of Nature without pleasure, or who hopes to enjoy the delights and blessings of life without feeling that gratitude to God forms their highest charms, and without becoming in consequence habitually cheerful, is surely much to be pitied.

If this be true of one who is merely insensible to the charms of the physical world, how much more strongly does it apply to those who are not duly sensible of the far higher blessings and advantages of the moral world in which we are placed, and in the concerns of which we are called upon to take an active part, not merely as a matter of choice or taste, but as a solemn duty! We have to thank Providence not only for the gifts of light, and life, and liberty, and love, and a thousand subordinate enjoyments; but we possess the consolations, the hopes, and other high privileges of religion, added to the advantages of those intellectual treasures so bounteously scattered at our feet. To every well-constituted mind, therefore, and to every heart strongly impressed with a sense of its duties, the world teems with occasions for practising the virtue of cheerfulness. The right employment of opportunities of leisure, in the advancement of moral and literary improvement, and the extension of sound principles amongst our fellow-men less fortunately circumstanced in life; the agreeable and useful intercourse of friendship, the tender ties of relationship in all their varied knots, and links, and bands; the affections and sympathies of true charity towards the whole family of mankind, offer solid foundations on which every description of talents, taste, knowledge, or industry, may securely build up for itself a temple to the honour of the God of mercy, who has given faculties to his creatures, to use, and not to abuse; to enjoy in sincerity and with cheerfulness, and not to fling away in churlish insensibility. Indeed, it appears to be little short of irreligion to withhold this natural and easy homage, so eminently due to such a beneficent power; and there is probably no piety more pure, or which seems more likely to be acceptable to our Maker, than to taste in moderation, and to acknowledge with thankfulness, the blessings he has sent us.

Such, in a few words, is an imperfect sketch of what may be called the selfish, or rather the personal, view of this subject. Considered, again, as an obligation we owe to others, the duty of cheerfulness is, if possible, still more clear; but as it is of greater importance and difficulty in the execution, it is not always exercised in the imperative way it ought to be. Many persons of good principles and virtuous minds are content to practise only the higher and more solemn virtues. When great occasions arise, they are willing to make great sacrifices, and are seldom insensible to the call of duty when earnestly and loudly, and, above all, publicly made upon them. To do a signal service to a friend or relation, they scruple not to risk their fortune; and for their country's service they will risk, or even freely sacrifice, both life and fortune. Yet these very persons are often indifferent to the much more frequent, and, upon the whole, possibly more useful, calls of humbler but equally essential obligations. They too often forget that true charity ought always to begin at home, where every man's duties to society necessarily take their start; and they court, in the publicity of worldly distinction, a praise which, if all were known, might often prove the bitterest satire on their neglect of domestic claims, ten times more important and binding upon them. They consider it beneath them to do good on the small scale, or, to speak more correctly, they sel-

dom think on the subject at all, unless the claim, whether reasonable or unreasonable, be very importunate. It does not occur to them how much may be done by mere manner alone, to sweeten and enliven the ordinary hours of common-place life, both at home and abroad. They satisfy themselves with looking out for those great occasions when they may pay up the whole debt of negligence of the feelings and wants of others by a round sacrifice of their money or their time; while they let the current business of the day pass without contributing, by a single smile of approbation, or a word of encouragement, to augment the smaller enjoyments of their fellow-creatures. They seem to make a rule of conferring no favours without imposing obligation, and thus destroy their own handiwork by the irritating reaction of wounded pride; instead of inspiring gratitude and regard, they produce nothing but ill-will.

There are few secrets more important, indeed, than the art of bestowing favours so gracefully as not to ruffle the feelings of the receiver, or not to awaken that sense of humiliation in his breast which the very act of implied inferiority must have a tendency to create. Here it is that the practice of cheerfulness, in its genuine sense, comes so fully into play. How sensible are not all of us naval men, who have been brought up in a course of strict discipline, to the very different manner in which the usual indulgences of the service are granted to us by different persons! Have we not all felt, again and again, that a favour from an officer of sense and consideration has been more than doubled, in our apprehension, by the kindly manner in which it was bestowed; and how cordially we felt obliged to him, not so much for the mere favour itself, as for the cheerfulness with which the gift was sweetened, and the friendly interest he took in granting what we wished, in the very manner we wished? Even a refusal from such a person may often prove a source of increased cordiality and mutual good understanding. The art lies far less in merely giving or merely denying what is solicited, than in showing that a generous and hearty sentiment of good-will is at the bottom in either case. But have we not all too often seen favours bestowed, or rather flung at us, in such a manner as to mortify far more than oblige us; to irritate and humiliate instead of conciliating? Yet, in these instances, it is by no means improbable that the ungracious giver had no intention of offending; but either was not aware, or did not recollect, that a small sprinkling of cheerfulness, which costs nothing in the shape of effort, provided it be habitually the rule of conduct, would have put all right. If this strikes us as being true in our own case, when we are made to suffer, I must take leave to remark, that there is no person afloat or on land, whatever be his rank or station in the fleet or in the world, who may not have it in his power, probably many times in every day, to exercise to pleasing and useful purpose the very principle to which we have been alluding—I mean the art of doing favours in a kindly instead of a gruff way.

Every hour, indeed every place, and every occupation in life, presents us with opportunities of contributing to the smaller enjoyments of our fellow-men, provided we are sincerely on the watch for them; or, which is the same thing in other words, provided we have acquired the habit, on principle, of acting in a kind and generous temper. But in a world like this, in which, with many resources of happiness, there exist also much pain, sorrow, misfortunes, and innumerable vexations and crosses, worn-out hopes, bruised spirits, and blasted affections, such a task is not always an easy one. But it is not the less our duty because it is difficult; and there can be no question that all these evils will be much more readily lightened by a steady and express course of cheerful exertion, than by occasional great efforts. We ought not therefore, to let one hour pass away in apathy, still less in unhappiness or gloom, if by any effort on our part we can throw a light of serenity over it. If we cannot render our less fortunate brethren any more essential service, we can at least cheer them by every means that kind words, and looks, and cordial demeanour, are capable of affording. It is not everybody that needs, or everybody that has it in his power to confer, what is termed a substantial favour. But all of us are the better for the sympathy and converse of our friends and neighbours, and all of us have it in our power, more or less, to confer this description of favour on others. If we are in the habit of fostering right feelings in our breast, and if, on principle, we give them practical exercise at all times, we shall come at last to be fully alive to the inestimable blessings of friendship and society, and feel bound to express our sense of these advantages by imparting a share of them to those around us.

It is not easy, when our own hearts are wrung with anguish, to speak of comfort to a brother in similar affliction; but still it becomes us, even then, for the purposes of future happiness, to give our sympathy the cheerful character which is not without hope, and, instead of making the worst of bad things, always to make the best we can of them. It is surely one of the most imperative of our Christian duties to recollect at such moments that the visitations which well nigh crush us to the ground are dispensations of mercy much more than sentences of justice; and also, that, as they are sent to try and to purify us, it becomes us to meet the Divine intention by a hearty co-operation, and not to provoke further displeasure by querulous discontent, or a presumptuous doubt as to the fitness of the time and measure of the lesson.

But it is not only on these serious and trying occasions that the virtue to which I am endeavouring to draw your notice is of value in alleviating the inevitable sorrows of our lot on earth; for there is not a transaction in life, not a professional duty to be executed, not a company we go into, where a cheerful and animated manner may not carry with it some essential benefit to the persons around us, to ourselves, and the cause we serve, be that what it may. No man is without duties of some kind to society, and no man can pretend to execute these with negligence, without the chance of doing some mischief; in fact, there are perhaps few more decided symptoms of negligence in character than the absence of cheerfulness. The best conversation which one meets with in the world is not always that in which wit, or wisdom, or learning, or genius, or great knowledge of any kind, is displayed; but that in which, however

unimportant the subject may be, the company show, by the hearty interest they take in what is said, that they are not only pleased themselves, but sincerely desirous of making others equally happy. It is therefore a clear duty to cultivate every habit, and every sentiment, and to bind ourselves by every principle that may contribute within the limits of reason and moderation to enliven and relieve, as well as to improve, the time which we pass with those about us. All this applies with peculiar force to our most intimate and most habitual associates—with our families, if we be at home—with our shipmates, if we are sailing on the wide ocean.

'Cheerfulness,' says the amiable and accomplished writer of the last century, whose words I have already quoted, 'is the best promoter of health. Repinings and secret murmurings give imperceptible strokes to those delicate fibres of which the vital parts are composed, and wear out the machine insensibly; not to mention those violent ferments which they stir up in the blood, and those irregular disturbed motions which they raise in the animal spirits.' . . . . . 'The truth of it is,' he continues, 'health and cheerfulness mutually beget each other; with this difference, that we seldom meet with a great degree of health which is not attended with a certain cheerfulness, but very often see cheerfulness where there is no great degree of health*.'

To this I shall merely add, that, as nothing tends more to keep us in health than this delightful frame of mind, so few things contribute more to assist our recovery when we fall into sickness. It aids the renovating powers of the body, between which and the attributes of the mind there exists a mysterious influence; and although we cannot explain how it acts, we may safely profit by its agency to advance our return to health. It is, in truth, the best medicine, and this the physician well knows, when he says to his patient, 'Keep your mind easy.' Alas, how seldom is it in our power to obey this injunction! And why is it so difficult? Not, I fully believe, so much from the pain of the disease, or any dread of its consequences, as from our having omitted, in seasons of health and strength, both of body and mind, to acquire the habit of cheerfulness. We cannot muster up this degree of tranquillity all at once, though we are assured it is necessary to the *right* action of the remedies applied; on the contrary, it will often happen to a person who has not in health exercised the virtues of patience and composure, that a knowledge of their urgent necessity, now he is weakened by sickness, excites and alarms him to such a degree that the doctor's injunctions to be calm only augment, in place of diminishing, the evil.

This leads me to remark, that, of all persons, perhaps the one who has it most in his power to do good by the uniform practice of cheerfulness, is a conscientious and skilful medical man. With him the acquisition of this habit is a duty of the most sacred kind; and a very little acquaintance with its practice, in the true spirit of Christian charity and genuine self-control, will show him that there is no hypocrisy in its exercise almost to any extent. But it certainly requires some clearness of mind to see this, and still more vigour of character to carry it into execution. Nor do I believe that any powers of the understanding, or any tenderness of feeling, could enable a medical man to preserve his composure throughout the varied and dreadful scenes to which he is drawn, unless he made it his uniform study to acquire the habit of thinking and feeling and looking cheerfully at all times.

Most naval men can bear witness to the beneficial effects of such conduct in the medical attendance on board ship; but I am anxious to impress upon every mind, that as the obligations of all duties are reciprocal, the kindness of the doctor loses half its efficacy, if not met by a correspondent feeling on the part of the patient. There can, of course, be no doubt that a sick man requires to be treated with indulgence, or that he has a right to expect considerable sacrifices at our hands to alleviate his sufferings. But he has no right whatever to be over-querulous or unreasonably exacting; and it is his interest to recollect, even in his most despondent or agonising moments, that his surest safeguard against inattention, and one of his most irresistible appeals to the sympathies and hearty assitsance of his friends in health, will consist in the placidity of temper with which he bears his sufferings.

With regard to the advantages of cheerfulness in the performance of professional duties, a great deal might be said. It is sufficiently familiar to every one's experience, indeed, that the man who goes through his labour with a light heart, not only bears it better, but performs it better, than one whose feelings are morose, and his disposition churlish and discontented. In no walk of life, perhaps, is this truth more apparent than on board ship, where we are jammed so close together, and where, in spite of all our discipline and distinctions, we are compelled to act in companionship, in all weathers and under all circumstances. We are boarded and lodged, pretty much alike; we travel together and fight together; we enjoy in company the luxuries, as well as endure the hardships, of remote and varied climates; we sink or swim under one course of fortune, and are alike exposed to sickness and other disasters: why, then, should we not be, in truth and sincerity, one family, linked together by a common set of interests, duties, and hopes? As the advantages of our situation afloat certainly far overbalance the inconveniences, it would surely be a great step in nautical morals if we could teach our young men, and, indeed, teach ourselves, old as well as young, to consider uniform cheerfulness so much in the light of a positive duty that its sunshiny influence should never leave our minds, but permanently regulate and temper the whole of our mutual intercourse.

In a most particular manner we ought, in kindness to the rising generation alluded to, and in furtherance of our own schemes for their future welfare, to recollect, that one of the chief reasons for young folks being unwilling to adopt strict principles as rules of action, is the dread they naturally feel of being called upon to sacrifice all the enjoyments of life; a consequence which appears quite unnatural, and certainly is most unacceptable. In all kinds of education it must lead to much virtue, and prevent the occurrence

* Addison, Spectator, No. 387.

of much vice, to give our pupils habits of good humour, and to encourage the growth of these habits by constant exercise. When a child is taught to cultivate every social and exhilarating propensity, to find in every little incident and employment a subject of innocent pleasure, and perhaps instructive enjoyment, there is not much chance of bad passions or vicious indulgences finding admission to its breast. The seeds of future piety, and the most productive and firmest principle, may then be most advantageously sown. But if, on the contrary, the susceptibilities of the mind for pleasure are too roughly frustrated or unreasonably checked by a morose and gloomy system of instruction, the consequences are, first, a peevish temper, then a misanthropical discontent, very fatal to the exercise of Christian charity. Or it may happen, that a young person thus sternly brought up, will, by a violent reaction, burst through all control, and plunge so deep into the stream of licentiousness, that all chance of recovery is gone. Many a lad who is denied the every-day calm and moderate cheerfulness of a happy home or a happy ship, seeks to avenge himself for hours of dull and useless restraint by fits of wild and sensual dissipation. The mind of man is, more or less, the same at all ages, and in all professions; being made for enjoyments, if it does not receive them in moderation, and from the legitimate quarters, whence they may reasonably be looked for, it will grasp at pleasures, and share in them to excess, either to its own total ruin or to the destruction of all healthful tone and cheerfulness of temper.

I have adverted to this point in the education of young persons, not only to fix the attention of my brother officers generally to the subject, but also for the purpose of remarking to the officers and leading men of particular ships, that although the persons under their control are not children in years, or in ignorance of the world, they are still members of the same family, who look up to their superiors for guidance and instruction, and who are entitled to expect at their hands a constant example of patience, forbearance, and a manifestation of that inherent elasticity of mind, which is one of the surest evidences that the genuine spirit of piety is working within them.

The most sacred and solemn engagements of any man's life, his most disagreeable and arduous duties, as well as those which are trivial or monotonous, may all be performed in the spirit recommended, not only without interruption, but with great advantage to the public service. In nothing does the truth of this appear more forcibly than in the discipline of a ship of war, where orders and counter-orders, in endless complication, must frequently be given; where the temper of the officer and the patience of his people are so severely tried; where the sources of mortification and disappointment are so numerous; where fatigue, hunger, and disease, so often combine to disturb both the animal and the intellectual economy of our nature; where all our habits are broken up, and our own private wishes frequently obliterated in those of the public service; where punishments must sometimes be inflicted; where favours may either be granted or refused; where resolutions require to be formed on the instant, and carried into execution with promptitude and certainty of purpose, otherwise all may be lost; and where, finally, on occasions when vigorous action is required at our hands, unless there be a firm and hearty cohesion of all the different powers which the ship includes, the whole scheme of our boasted discipline may fall to pieces, and the best expectations of our country be cruelly thwarted. At such times, the transcendent advantages of cheerfulness become apparent. With what renewed vigour have not all of us been made to spring to our stations, and labour with unflinching spirits, when called upon by the animated voice of an officer whom habit had taught us to know was always 'of good cheer' himself, and always considerate of others! Every one, likewise, must have remarked the stimulating effects of these qualities even on those indolent growlers and skulkers, who, in all ships, hang about the decks like drones. Constant good spirits, indeed, in an officer, are far more effectual in seasons of protracted hard work than splicing the main-brace every half hour. His very look and tone impart fresh vigour to the well-disposed, give new energy to the languid and wearied, and hold out intelligible and manly motives even to the discontented.

In conclusion, it may be useful to remember, that 'there are, in fact, but two circumstances which can reasonably deprive us of this cheerfulness of heart. The first of these is a sense of guilt. A man who lives in a state of vice and impenitence can have no title to that evenness and tranquillity of mind which is the health of the soul, and the natural effect of virtue and innocence*.' The other circumstance is irreligion, or that desolate and dreary state in which the soul, capable of such great things when duly associated with its Maker and its Saviour, is left to drift about on the wide and shoreless ocean of infidelity, not only without the breath of hope to fill its sails, but without needle or pole-star to point out its course, and give useful direction to its own feeble, unassisted, wavering impulses.

Let us, then, avoid this miserable condition, by being true not only to our earthly, but to our heavenly King,—a double allegiance in name, but single in purpose. For we may rest assured, that a well-understood religion stands in the way of nothing that is right, never fails to give warning when dangers are ahead, cheers and animates every enterprise; while most truly it is written, HER WAYS ARE WAYS OF PLEASANTNESS, AND ALL HER PATHS ARE PEACE†.

CHAPTER XIX.

BOMBAY.

I HAVE seen some persons who, after losing their friends, their health, or their fortunes in India, have looked back to that bright country without pleasure; but I am not sure that I ever met any one who arrived in it without great satisfaction, or who could hail the first glimpse of a

* Addison. Spectator, No. 381.

† For the greater part both of the substance, and of the expressions used in this chapter, I am indebted to the kindness of an accomplished friend, whose whole life is a practical illustration of the truth and value of these doctrines.

world so totally new without feelings of curiosity more than commonly excited. For my own part, I was thrown into a high fever of wonder and enjoyment; and assuredly, as long as I have a trace of memory left, must retain the recollection of that happy period carved brightly and distinctly on my mind.

Early on the morning of the 11th of August, 1812, we first made the coast of Asia; and, on steering towards the shore, discovered, close under the land, a single sail, as white as snow, of a cut quite new to our seamanship, and swelled out with the last faint airs of the land-breeze, which, in the night, had carried us briskly along shore. As we came nearer, we observed that the boat, with her head directed to the northward, was piled half-mast high with fruits and vegetables, cocoa-nuts, yams, plantains, intended evidently for the market of Bombay. The water lay as smooth as that of a lake; so we sheered close alongside, and hailed, to ask the distance we still were from our port. None of the officers of the Volage could speak a word of Hindustanee; and I well remember our feeling of humiliation when a poor scullion, one of the cook's assistants, belonging to the governor's suite, was dragged on deck, with all his grease and other imperfections on his head, to act as interpreter. Sad work he made of it; for, though the fellow had been in the East on some ten or twelve former voyages, the languages of the countries he visited had not formed so important a part of his studies as the quality of the arrack and toddy which they produced. The word Bombaya, however, struck the ear of the native boatmen, who pointed in the direction to which they themselves were steering, and called out "Mombay! Mombay!" This word, I am told by an oriental scholar, is a corruption of Moomba-devy, or the Goddess of Moomba, from an idol to which a temple is still dedicated on the island. Others, less fanciful in their etymology, say that the Portuguese gave it the name of Bom-Bahia, on account of the excellence of its Port. That nation held possession of Bombay from the year 1530 to 1661, when it was ceded by the crown of Portugal in full sovereignty to Charles II.

It was not long before we came in sight of several headlands, which are so well described by that great hydrographer, my excellent friend Captain James Horsburgh, that we knew our place almost as well as if we had been sailing between the Motherbank and Spithead. When the next day broke, and the sun rose upon us over the flat-topped Gauts or mountains of the Mahratta country, I remember feeling almost at a loss whether I had been sleeping and dreaming during the night, or whether the gay reality, with its boundless vista of promises, was still before my eyes. But the actual sight of the coast gave reality to pictures which, for many a long year before, I had busied my fancy with painting, in colours drawn partly from the Arabian Nights and Persian Tales, and partly, if not chiefly, from those brilliant clusters of oriental images which crowd and adorn the pages of Scripture.

Besides the mere picturesque feelings excited by such reflections, I had accidentally acquired others somewhat more substantial, perhaps, and practically useful, from being thrown a good deal into the society of officers who had served in various parts of India, and called my attention to the histories and to the political arrangements of our possessions in the East. What with fiction, and what with truth, therefore, my head was pretty full of combustible materials, ready to be acted upon at once by anything and everything that should meet the eye on landing.

Captain Cook asserts somewhere, when speaking of the delights of voyaging and travelling, that to such rovers as he and his companions, nothing came amiss; and I can safely venture to boast, that, as far as this goes, I may claim a corner of my great brother-officer's mantle. At all events, in sailing over the Indian seas, or travelling in those countries by land, I not only never met anything that came amiss, but hardly ever met anything which did not so much exceed in interest what I had looked for, that the grand perplexity became, how to record what was felt, or in any adequate terms to describe even the simplest facts, which struck the eye at every turn in that 'wide realm of wild reality.'

Of all places in the noble range of countries so happily called the Eastern world, from the pitch of the Cape to the islands of Japan, from Bengal to Batavia, nearly every hole and corner of which I have visited in the course of my peregrinations, there are few which can compare with Bombay. If, indeed, I were consulted by any one who wished as expeditiously and economically as possible to see all that was essentially characteristic of the Oriental world, I would say, without hesitation, "Take a run to Bombay; remain there a week or two; and having also visited the scenes in the immediate neighbourhood, Elephanta, Carli, and Poonah, you will have examined good specimens of most things that are curious or interesting in the East."

For this remarkable distinction, quite peculiar, as far as I know, to that one spot on the earth's surface, this presidency is indebted to a variety of interesting circumstances. Bombay, as perhaps many people may never have heard before, is an island, and by no means a large one, being only between six and seven miles long by one or two broad. It is not, however, by geographical dimensions that the wealth of towns, any more than the power and wealth of nations, is determined. The harbour unites every possible desideratum of a great sea-port; it is easy of access and egress; affords excellent anchoring-ground; is capacious beyond the utmost probable demands of commerce; and, owing to the great rise and fall of the tides, is admirably adapted for docks of every description. The climate is healthy; and the country, being diversified by numerous small ridges and hills, furnishes an endless choice of situations for forts, towns, bazaars, and villages, not to say bungalows or villas, and all sorts of country-houses, and some very splendid retreats from the bustle of business. The roads which intersect this charming island were beautifully Macadamised, as I well remember, long before that grand improvement was heard of in England; and as the soil of the island is made up of that rich kind of mould resulting from decomposed basalt or lava, the whole surface affords a good sample of the perennial verdure of tropical scenery, which dazzles and surprises the new-comer, while its interest seldom, if ever, fails to rise still

higher upon a more prolonged and intimate acquaintance.

Such are among the eminent physical advantages enjoyed by Bombay; but even these, had they been many times greater, would have been light in the balance compared to those of a moral, or rather of a political nature, which conspired in 1812 to render it one of the most important spots in that quarter of the globe. At the time I speak of, it was almost the only possession exclusively British within several hundred miles in any direction. The enormous territory of the Mahrattas lay close to Bombay on the east; and I mention this one district because the name is more or less familiar to English ears, chiefly, perpaps, from its having been the scene of the Duke of Wellington's earliest campaign in command of an army. The brilliant course of that service was wound up by the well-known battle of Assaye, not the least hard fought of his hundred fields. Assaye is about twice as far from Bombay as Waterloo from London. To any person familiar with modern Indian history, the name of Basseen, where one of the most celebrated treaties that ever statesmen agreed upon was signed, will be well remembered. Then who is there that has not heard of the caves of Elephanta, those singular temples of the old Hindoos, excavated on the side of a hill on an island in the very harbour, and within one hour's row from the fort?

These, and many other circumstances, some military, some historical, give a very peculiar degree of liveliness to the interest we feel in that spot; and I certainly have as yet seen very few places on the globe which fasten themselves with more tenacity on the memory. I allude chiefly to matters of taste, association, and other refinements, with which the natives of the countries surrounding Bombay have no concern. To them it possesses, or did then possess, exclusively, an interest of a different and far more important character. At that time it was almost the only spot in that range of country where persons and property were perfectly secure, and in which all men might safely display and enjoy their wealth to the utmost limits of their taste for ostentatious parade, or hoard it as parsimoniously as they pleased, without the slighest chance of arbitrary interference. In addition to this, every form of religious worship was not merely tolerated, but allowed to exercise itself with the most ample and equal freedom. Every native of Asia, or of any other country in the world, so long as he infringed none of the established laws of the Presidency, was allowed equal privileges; and as the advantages of security and freedom, in the most genuine senses of these words, were enjoyed under none of the native governments adjacent, but, on the contrary, were almost entirely unknown in them all, Bombay became the natural place of resort for the wealthy from all parts of India lying on that side of the Peninsula, and indeed from many other regions much more remote.

The population of Bombay is about two hundred thousand; and I think it may be said with truth, that we can see nothing in China, or Java, or the Philippine Islands, or along the Malay Peninsula, or even in the interior parts of India, any single caste, or dress, or custom, or form of superstition, or anything else, belonging peculiarly to Eastern manners, which we may not witness at Bombay in as genuine and apparently unsophisticated a condition as on the spot to which it properly belongs. In twenty minutes' walk through the bazaar of Bombay, my ear has been struck by the sounds of every language that I have heard in any other part of the world, uttered not in corners and by chance, as it were, but in a tone and manner which implied that the speakers felt quite at home. In the same short space of time I have counted several dozens of temples, pagodas, joss-houses, and churches; and have beheld the Parsees, the lineal religious descendants of Zoroaster, worshipping fire; the Hindoos, with equal earnestness, bowing their heads to Baal in the shape of a well-oiled black stone, covered with chaplets of flowers and patches of rice; while in the next street the Mahometan ceremonies of the grand Moharem were in full display; and in the midst of all a Portuguese procession bearing an immense cross, and other Roman Catholic emblems, as large as life.

I have no language competent to give expression to the feelings produced by the first contemplation of so strange a spectacle. I was startled, amused, deeply interested, and sometimes not a little shocked. The novelty of the scene was scarcely diminished by a further inspection; which may appear a contradiction in terms, but is not so in reality. The multitude of ideas caused by the first view of such an astonishing crowd of new and curious objects, obscures and confuses the observation, in a certain sense, and prevents us from distinguishing one part from another. In like manner, I remember being almost stupefied with astonishment, when Sir John Herschel first showed me one of the great nebulæ or clusters of stars in his telescope at Slough. When, however, the philosopher unfolded the results of his own observations, and ventured to separate and distinguish the different orders of nebulæ and double stars, or pointed the instrument to the planet which his illustrious father discovered, and made me understand, or tried to make me understand, the revolutions of its satellites, I felt the confusion by which at first I was distracted gradually subsiding, while the fresh interest of the spectacle, strictly speaking, was greatly increased. And so I found it in India, especially at that most curious of places, Bombay, where the more I saw of the natives, the more there seemed still to discover that was new. It would be absurd to pretend that all this pedantic kind of reasoning process took place at the moment, for, in truth, I was too much enchanted to speculate deeply on the causes of the enjoyment. I shall never forget, however, the pleasure with which I heard a native, with a bowl in his hand, apply to a dealer in corn for some of the grain called Sesamé. The word, in strictness, is not the Indian name for this seed, though it is used generally in Hindustan. Til is the native term for the plant from which the oil of sesamum is expressed; Semsem being the original Arabic word. I need not say how immediately the sound recalled the 'Open Sesamé!' of the Arabian Nights; and the whole of the surrounding scene, being in strict character with that of the tale, I felt as if I had been touched with some magic wand, and transported into the highest heaven of Eastern invention. As I gazed

at all things round me in wonder and delight, I could fix my eye on nothing I had ever seen before. The dresses, in endless variety of flowing robes and twisted turbans, flitted like a vision before me. The Hindoos, of innumerable castes, were there, each distinguished from the other by marks drawn with brilliant colours on his brow. There stood Persian merchants with shawls and other goods from Cashmere, mingled with numerous Arab horse-dealers careering about; Malays from the Straits of Malacca, chatting familiarly with those good-natured, merry fellows, the long-tailed Chinese, whose most ungraceful Tartar dress and tuft contrast curiously in such a crowd with the tastefully arranged drapery and gorgeous turbans of the Mahometans and Hindoos.

Some of these groups were fully as much distinguished by their sandals and slippers as by their head-gear; others arrested the attention by the sound of their voices, and many by the peculiarity of their features and complexion. It really signified little which way the eye was turned, for it could rest on nothing, animate or inanimate, which was not strange and full of interest. Most of the trees which shaded us, and especially a tall variety of the palm tribe, commonly called the Brab, I had never seen before. It is named by botanists *Borassus flabelliformis*, or Tara Palm; Tara or Tair being the native word for the toddy which is yielded by these trees. It grows, in respect to its stem, like the coca-nut, with a glorious set of projecting arms at the top. But these branches, different from those of the cocoa-nut, do not send forth along their whole length lateral leaves resembling the ostrich feather, to which the cocoa-nut leaf is very similar in form. They are smooth and naked to the end, on which is opened out, rather fantastically, a huge circular leaf, marked with divisions like those of a fan, radiating from a centre, each ray or division being sharp-pointed.

But the chief object of attraction, and I may well say of admiration, in this gay scene, was the appearance of the women, who are not only not concealed, but go about freely, and, generally speaking, occupy themselves out of doors in works not requiring any considerable strength, but a good deal of dexterity. Of course, this does not include the highest classes, who are kept quite secluded. The females appear to be the great water-carriers; and the pots or chatties, as they are called, which are invariably borne on the head, are of the most elegant forms imaginable. Indeed, when standing by the side of a Hindoo tank, or reservoir, as I have often done for hours together, I have been reminded of those beautiful Etruscan vases, the discovery of which has given so new a character to modern forms. This practice of carrying all loads on the head is necessarily accompanied by an erect carriage of body, and accordingly the most graceful of dancers, even the matchless Bigottini herself, might have

"Snatched a grace beyond the reach of art,"

from observing the most ordinary Hindoo girl on her return from the tank, with her hand sometimes just touching the vessel poised on her head, and sometimes not, so true is the balance, and so certain the bearer's step. The dress of these women consists chiefly of one strip of cloth, many yards in length. This narrow web is wound round the body and limbs with so much propriety, that while the most scrupulous delicacy could find nothing to censure on the score of deficiency in covering, it is arranged with such innate and judicious taste, that even the eye of a sculptor could hardly wish many of its folds removed. The figure of the Hindoos, both male and female, is small and delicate; and, although their features are not always handsome, there is something about their expression which strikes every stranger as singularly pleasing, perhaps from its being indicative of that patience, docility, and contentment, which are certainly their chief characteristics. We see at least, in every part of our Eastern empire, that, with a little care, coupled with a full understanding of their habits and wishes, and backed by a thorough disinterestedness, and genuine public spirit on the part of their rulers, the above-mentioned qualities of the Hindoos may be turned to the highest account in all the arts of war, and many of the arts of peace.

Perhaps not the least curious sight in the bazaar of Bombay are the ornaments worn by the women and children, by which, with the most lavish profusion, and the most ill-directed taste, they succeed in disfiguring themselves as much as possible. And this might lead us almost to suspect that their taste in the other parts of their dress, like the gracefulness of their carriage, is the result, not of choice and study, but of happy accident. The custom of carrying their water-vessels on the head requires an erectness of gait during the performance of that duty, which may become the easiest and most natural at other times. And probably some circumstance incident to the climate may, in like manner, direct the fashion in adjusting their drapery.

Most of the women wear nose-rings, of great dimensions. I have seen many which hung below the chin; and certainly to us this seems a strange ornament. I forget whether or not the Hindoo women cover their fingers with rings, as our ladies do, but their principal fashion seems to consist in loading the wrists and ankles with armlets and bangles, as they are called, of gold and silver. The virgin gold generally used for this purpose is almost always rich, and grateful to the eye. But, I imagine, no art can make a silver ornament look any thing but vulgar. Just as we sometimes see persons in Europe crowd ring upon ring on their fingers, till all beauty is lost in the heap, and all taste sacrificed for the mere sake of ostentatious display; so, in India, I have observed women, whose legs were covered with huge circles of gold and silver from the instep nearly to the knee, and their arms similarly hooped round almost to the elbow. The jingle made by these ornaments striking against one another gives ample warning of a woman's approach; a circumstance which has probably led to the notion that this custom of attaching, as it were, a set of bells to the heels of the ladies, may have been an institution of jealousy devised by the husbands of those warm latitudes, to aid their researches after their gadding spouses. I cannot say how this theory squares with history; but I have never heard any hypothesis equally good to account for the still more ridiculous, not to say cruel custom, of covering the legs and arms of their poor little children with

these rings. I have seen a girl three years old so loaded with them, that she could not walk or hold out her arms; and I once counted no fewer than twenty heavy gold chains on a child's neck, besides such numbers of rings on its arms and legs, that the little thing looked more like an armadillo of the picture-books than a human being. Such is the passion of some Hindoo parents for this practice, that I have been assured they often convert their whole worldly substance into this most useless form of the precious metals, and thus transform their progeny into a sort of money-chest. Small happiness is it for these innocent wretches, however, who, as the head police-magistrate informed me, are not infrequently murdered for the sake of the property they carry about with them!

I have before remarked, that when a traveller is first thrown into such a scene as I have here alluded to, although his enjoyment certainly is very great, there often comes across him a feeling of hopelessness, when he admits to himself his total inability to record one hundredth, one millionth part, I may say, of the splendid original. Everything is totally new to him; even the commonest implements of husbandry, the pots and pans, the baskets and barrels, the carts and carriages, all are strange to his eyes, and far beyond the reach of his pen; while things which stand higher in the scale come still less within its range. Then what is he to do with the sounds he hears, or the motion he perceives? And strange it is to admit, but true, that the interest is at times actually increased by circumstances which are in themselves very annoying. I well remember submitting even to the intense heat and glare with great patience, and almost relish, in consideration of their being strictly in character with a scene I had so long ardently desired to witness. The formidable smell of assafœtida, which reigns in every Indian market, I nearly learned to bear without a qualm, for the same reason. Other annoyances I cared very little about; and had it not been for the well-cursed mosquitoes, I should not hesitate to declare, that, as far as travelling human nature is capable of happiness, I was perfectly happy when cruising about the bazaars of Bombay.

Full well am I aware, that much of all this will appear to many excellent persons who have been in the East, or who may visit it after me, as sufficiently fanciful and exaggerated; and there are many who will pass through the very scenes which excited in me so much rapture, and will have no more anxious wish than to get safely out of it before they are splashed with mud from the feet of the wild-looking, blue-skinned buffaloes, or have their toes trodden upon by bullocks with great humps between their shoulders. It is impossible to expect general sympathy for such things; and accordingly, my English friends at Bombay used often to laugh heartily when I returned from these Arabian Night sort of excursions, with my head brimful of turbaned Turks, Hindoo pagodas, and all kinds of Oriental associations about the Indus and the Ganges, or Brahma and Vishnoo, or with speculations on the customs, languages, and manners, of the extraordinary collection of people I had been rambling amongst.

But there is one set of images and delightful illustrations, meeting the eye at every turn in India, which I have never seen any person so insensible as not to attend to with unaffected interest. I allude to those numerous every-day customs of the East, so often mentioned incidentally in the Scriptures, and with which our minds have become familiar from earliest infancy. We so naturally associate these customs with the sacred writings, that we are easily drawn to link the two indissolubly together. Before visiting Eastern countries, we almost fancy, that because the events related in the Bible, and the characters who acted in them, have passed away and become matter of history, so also must the customs have disappeared which served as familiar illustrations between man and man, or between our Saviour and the human beings whom it was the object of his mission to impress with his doctrine. We are apt to be startled, therefore, when we find ourselves actually surrounded by scenes almost identical with those described in the Bible. Be all this as it may, I could never see a Hindoo female sitting by the steps of a well in India, with her arm thrown wearily over the unfilled water-pot, without thinking of the beautiful story of the woman of Samaria, the association being, perhaps, helped by the recollection of a well-known Italian picture, in which the figures and the scenery are represented quite in the Eastern style, such as I was now beholding it for the first time.

"Two women shall be grinding at the mill, the one shall be taken, and the other left," conveys scarcely any meaning to European readers. But in India, where we see constantly two female millers, sitting cross-legged on the ground, turning by one handle the upper of two small stones, we are at once struck with the force of the illustration used to explain the uncertainty which should prevail at the destruction of the City. It is difficult, on looking at two persons so engaged, to conceive a situation in which it would be less easy to remove the one without interfering with the other; and this point was admirably enforced by reference to a custom with which every listener in those countries must have been quite familiar. The industry of commentators on the Bible has, I observe, long ago discovered the true explanation of this, and many other passages apparently obscure, but pregnant with meaning when duly investigated. Nevertheless, I aver that a whole quarto of commentaries on the above verse could not have impressed my mind with a tenth part of the conviction which flashed upon me when I first saw two women actually "grinding at the mill;" all unconscious, poor folks! of the cause of my admiration, and as yet ignorant, alas! of the sublime lessons, to enforce and explain which their humble task was referred to.

On the morning after my arrival at Bombay, I got up with the first blush of the dawn, and hastily drawing on my clothes, proceeded alone greedily in search of adventures. I had not gone far, before I saw a native sleeping on a mat spread in the little verandah extending along the front of his house, which was made of basket-work plastered over with mud. He was wrapped up in a long web of white linen, or cotton cloth, called, I think, his cummerbund, or waist-cloth. As soon as the first rays of the sun peeped into his rude sleeping chamber, he "arose, took up his bed, and went into his house." I saw immediately an explanation of this expression, which, with slight

variations, occurs frequently in the Bible, in connexion with several of the most striking and impressive of Christ's miracles, particularly with that of the man sick of the palsy. My honest friend the Hindoo got on his feet, cast the long folds of his wrapper over his shoulder, stooped down, and having rolled up his mat, which was all the bed he required, he walked into the house with it, and then proceeded to the nearest tank to perform his morning ablutions.

I remember mentioning this, amongst many other illustrations of the incidents recorded in Scripture, to a worthy old Scotch lady, upon whom I expected it to produce the same pleasing and satisfactory effect which it had wrought on me. I made, however, a great mistake; for so far from raising myself in her estimation, on the score of correct observation, I sunk, I fear irrecoverably, in her good graces, by presuming, as she alleged, to interfere with the wonder of the miracle, the essence of which, according to her, I discovered to consist, not in the recovery of 'the man, who was made whole,' but in his being able to shoulder a four-post bed, and carry it off without inconvenience!

CHAPTER XX.

A FAMINE IN THE LAND.

So many new and interesting objects were placed before me, on first landing in India, that I scarcely even dared to think of endeavouring to describe them, and, accordingly, the memorandums which I find amongst my papers bear strong marks of an overloaded topic. And although there can be no doubt that a superabundance of matter is a better source of composition than a scantiness of materials, yet we may even in these respects have too much of a good thing, and be cast, at first, into a sort of despair, from the utter hopelessness of being able to do the subject any kind of justice. After a time, when the novelty begins to wear off, we may expect to find leisure to study each circumstance carefully, and to record it with distinctness. How vain this hope is, every traveller, I am pretty sure, will admit. For he soon discovers, that many of the most striking points which, from first engaging his attention, it would have been so important to seize and preserve, have either faded away, never to be recalled, or, which is more probable, their place has been supplied by others still more perplexing. It is certain, also, that many of those prominent differences between the manners of distant countries which, from first striking the observer, especially a sailor, who generally comes suddenly upon them, might constitute their chief interest in description, soon lose that bewitching sort of angular sharpness, due, perhaps, to novelty alone; and as the mind cannot be forced back to its original state, the later descriptions will always be more or less feeble and confused, like objects seen through an ill-adjusted telescope. If it be the traveller's wish, therefore, as it certainly appears to be his duty, to preserve, for the benefit of his friends, the more prominent differences between his own country and those he visits at a distance, he must contrive to work vigorously on his first landing, and set down, as well as he can, in order, or out of order, as many as possible of those prominent differences which actually strike him.

Some authorities, on the other hand, will have it, that the great use of travelling is to beget habits of correct observation, in order to the discovery of these very matters of fact, and to accustom the eye to view scenes of great bustle and variety, without allowing the judgment to be staggered by surprise; to exhibit truth, in short, stripped of the dazzling tinselly dress of novelty, and to enable the mind to take a rigidly correct view of things. This is all very fine talking in one's closet, but in practice it is rather bamboozling; and we may go on prosing for ever, to no great purpose, about such exercises having a tendency to strengthen the powers of discrimination, to wear off prejudices, and to enlarge our views; in short, to make a kind of wandering angels of us. I suspect, however (and hope), we shall long continue far astern of this state of prim perfection, and that whenever or wherever new scenes are presented to our observation, we shall be childish enough to be delighted with them as heretofore; and, without caring a straw whether what we set down is wise or foolish, prejudiced or liberal, angelic or diabolical, that we shall try earnestly, and with all honesty, to describe how and when and why we are pleased. To others must be left the task of making the requisite corrections.

As far as I can recollect, the first rational thing I did at Bombay, even before I had recovered from the intoxication of this glorious draught of novelty, was to engage a moonshee, or teacher of Hindoostanee, that I might take lessons in the colloquial dialect of India. This language is said to be a jargon, or lingua franca, a corrupt compound of many others. The greater part, I believe, is Persian, with a sprinkling of Arabic, a little Sanscrit, a few words of Portuguese, and here and there a faint dash of English. I remember, for example, hearing the English military words of command given to the native troops of an independent sovereign in the interior of the country, where the language in all other respects was Asiatic. "Shoulder arms"—"Present—Fire!" conveyed distinct practical ideas to the minds of the native soldiers; but neither they nor the officers had the slightest notion of their actual meaning.

It was the practice of the Spaniards, Portuguese, and most other nations which sent out colonies, to teach their own language to the natives amongst whom they settled. With the English a different plan has, I believe, always been followed, as our habit has been to acquire for ourselves the languages of the countries over which we obtained any influence. This difference is probably to be explained by some essential distinctions in the objects which the respective mother countries have had in view. The Spaniards and the Portuguese, the great original colonisers both of the eastern and of the western worlds, desired, after the acquisition of gold, to impart their religious creed to the natives. Accordingly, the term subdued, or conquered, became with them almost synonymous with the word converted. It was soon found that both those two ardent passions, the thirst for gain, and the zeal for making religious proselytes, were

most readily advanced by teaching the natives the language, dress, and customs of their conquerors. The object of the strangers being to obtain the precious metals, and to make converts at any cost, either of money or morality, they stuck at nothing by which either purpose could be accomplished. As the end, and not the means, in both cases, became, therefore, the sole consideration, it may pretty safely be asserted, that in this unprincipled race, success brought with it no honour or permanent profit to the colonists, while it inflicted nothing but misery on the natives. The gold which these foreign conquests enabled the Spaniards, in an evil hour, to collect, also contributed to destroy the honest industry of the mother country, while it substituted in its place nothing but the mere phantom of ill-gotten wealth. On the other hand, the mass of absurd and unintelligible formalities which they imposed upon their nominal converts, under the name of religion, entirely broke up the ancient prosperity and contentment of the poor Indians, without imparting to them one ray of genuine Christianity to lighten the double degree of darkness which appears to have followed the destruction of the religion of the Incas.

It must be confessed with shame, that the course adopted by the English, French, and other nations in North America, was really not much better; and, however we may now try to gloss over our doings in that country formerly, there can be no doubt of the fact, that we did extirpate the Indians as fast as we could, without thinking much, or even pretending to care much, about their souls. We made rather shorter work of it, indeed, than the Dons, and for the cross substituted sword and gun to pioneer the way before the wood-chopper's hatchet. In modern times, since the colonies have assumed the more dignified and responsible attitude of independent states, the instruction seems to have been bettered, as formal legislative enactments now take the place of powder and ball in the accomplishment of the self-same end. A similar kind and degree of morality and tenderness for the Indians are to be recognised as formerly; and the only difference is, that the rights of the aborigines are now 'extinguished' wholesale (such is the delicate term) by the most regular and well-debated acts of Congress.

To this rather satirical view of the matter an American, or, as they are facetiously called by the French and others, an Anglo-American, might very fairly answer, first, that the removal, extinction, or extirpation of the Indians (for these three words mean exactly the same thing), is absolutely unavoidable; that is to say, things are now come to such a pass, that either the white men or the red men must abandon the country entirely: and secondly, the Anglo-American might remark to us, "You English have no right to reproach us for extirpating the Indian tribes which stand in the course of our great tide-wave of population; for it was you yourselves who taught us the way." To this we could certainly make no good answer.

These painful colonial speculations will be found to have a direct bearing on the far more important and interesting subject of the occupation of the East Indies by the English; for I hope, by-and-by, to show how much of the dissimilarity in our administration of the Asiatic portion of our empire may have arisen from the deep disgrace our forefathers incurred by their proceedings against the natives in the West. For the present, however, I must content myself with a mere allusion to this inviting topic, and return to the gay and novel scenes at Bombay.

I considered myself as very fortunate in having arrived in India just as a severe famine was beginning to make itself felt over a great part of the north-western portion of Hindoostan. It may not be generally known, that most of the rice-crops of India, though not all of them, are dependent for their very existence upon the actual quantity of rain which falls in the wet season; so that, when the rains prove scanty, which misfortune occurs at irregular periods, the inevitable consequence is not merely a scarcity, but an absolute famine. In some regions of India, where mighty rivers, such as the Indus and Cavery, are entirely sucked up in the process of artificial irrigation, that is to say, are drawn off at the sides by what are called, I think, 'anicuts,' this frightful evil may be averted. Yet, even in those cases, the most swollen rivers can supply but a comparatively narrow strip of verdure along their banks, when compared to the thousands of thickly-peopled leagues of territory which must be left arid and hopeless when the windows of heaven remain unopened at their wonted season.

I am not sufficiently acquainted with the details of those terrible scourges, the Asiatic famines, by which whole tribes are sometimes swept away, to be able to describe correctly, from personal observation, their immediate causes and consequences. I can only answer for what I saw, and from that some idea may be formed of what was passing in the interior. I have already mentioned that Bombay, being almost the only perfectly secure spot in that quarter of India, had drawn to it, in the course of years, many of the native inhabitants, together with much of the wealth of the adjacent countries; and that the possessors of these riches, being under no apprehensions of the jealousy or cupidity of the government, lived in happiness, and spent their fortunes freely. The natural consequences followed this extensive demand for the luxuries, as well as the necessaries of life; traders of all descriptions flocked from the remotest corners of the world to reap the golden harvest, which only grew the faster and the richer for being well gathered in. Each year brought fresh and more wealthy settlers, and every sea-breeze wafted into the crowded and beautiful harbour of Bombay ships of every port from China to Peru. The resident population of all the native classes went on increasing under this prosperity, till, at the period I speak of (1812), it was rather more than a hundred and sixty thousand, though its numbers occasionally swelled to upwards of two hundred thousand at periods of public excitement, or high commercial enterprise. But what strikes the imagination as curious, or at least instructive, is the fact, that the produce of the whole island would not feed its ordinary inhabitants for more than a week; and yet there is not a spot, I will venture to say, on the earth's surface where the means of subsistence are cheaper, or in greater variety, and even profusion.

The explanation is almost too simple to require statement; but the consequences which followed

the occurrence of the terrible famine in Guzerat, and other districts at no great distance, in 1812 and 13, are not quite so obvious, though highly valuable. The produce of the island itself being so extremely small compared to the demand, it follows that Bombay must import all its grain; and, as a matter of course, the corn-dealers form a most important set of men. These persons draw their supplies of rice in ordinary times chiefly from the Malabar coast, which lies between them and Ceylon, and not very far to the southward; while they import most of their wheat, maize, and some other grain, from the high grounds of the Mahratta states, lying directly to the eastward. The interest of these great corn-merchants induces them to keep at all times a considerable stock of grain on hand, enough to feed the population for a period of more than a year. I have also some obscure recollection of the Government requiring them to retain a certain quantity. Be the cause what it may, there was actually stored in the granaries of Bombay, in the autumn of 1812, rice enough to have kept the population alive for fifteen months, even had there not arrived in the port another corn-ship in the interval. This position of things gave rise to one of the most tangibly interesting questions of political economy which I ever remember to have heard discussed.

The south-west monsoon, which blows from May to September, is the rainy season in that part of India; but August was now far advanced, and no rain had fallen, nor was there much hope that, if it fell so late, it would be in time to save the rice crop; so that, independently of the reported destruction caused by a flight of locusts in the north of India, experienced observers began to predict a famine in Cutch and Guzerat. There is perhaps no barometer, in these cases, so certain in its indications as that of hunger; and, accordingly, it was soon discovered that all the ferries between the mainland and the island of Bombay were crowded with half-famished natives, streaming in converging lines from all parts of the country towards this little island, which, I have already mentioned, was not in itself capable of raising, in the whole year, one-fiftieth part of the food required by its own inhabitants.

The resident native population of Bombay at that time may be thus stated in round numbers:—

Hindoos	103,786
Mussulmen	27,811
Parsees (worshippers of fire)	13,156
Jews	781
Native Christians	14,454
Permanent native residents	159,988
Add to these the European residents, and the European officers and troops	1,700
Native troops (officered by British)	3,000
And we have for the average fixed population of the island	164,688
Add the migratory or floating portion of the natives, who come and go according to seasons and other circumstances	52,012
The additional number of total strangers driven into the island by the great famine of 1812 and 1813 appears to have been about	20,000
Making a grand total of	236,700

The area of Bombay island is about 18¼ square miles, being between 7 and 8 miles long by 2 or 3 in breadth; so that taking the ordinary or average population, there are about 9000 residents for every square mile; while in times of pestilence and famine in the adjacent states it reaches nearly to 13,000 for each square mile. The houses may be reckoned at more than 20,000, and there occurred frequent instances of fifty, sixty, and even a hundred persons sleeping under one roof. I remember hearing of upwards of 300 persons being stowed away within the narrow limits of one building!

In all cases of approaching famine, there is another very sensitive test besides that of actual hunger, by which the true state of these political-economical questions may be judged of. I mean the purses of those who have to supply the wants of families, of women, and children; it is then that the corn-merchants learn with wonderful precision what is likely to be the state of the demand. On this occasion it was observable at Bombay, that as each successive hour passed off without rain, up went the value of corn. But although in this way the price soon became very high, it was still so much lower than was eagerly given in the north, at Guzerat, and elsewhere in those countries where the prospect of famine was now almost certain, that the corn-dealers of Bombay hastened to load every vessel they could lay hold of, to export their rice to markets where it was in such superior demand. Of course this exportation contributed to augment the price at Bombay, while fresh crowds of starving natives were pouring in every hour, and adding to the number of mouths, so as to give a most critical and interesting character to the situation of affairs.

"What is to be done?" said some of the members of the Government, justly alarmed. "Shall we shut the harbour altogether against the export of grain, and since we have one year's certain supply on hand, secure our own existence for that period, under all circumstances? It is next to certain, that long before the year expires, additional supplies will pour in from Bengal and other places, in which no failure of crop ever takes place. The cost will, no doubt, rise greatly in the bazaar here, and much misery will be the consequence, especially to those unhappy strangers who are rolling in upon us like the waves of the sea. Besides, self-preservation is the first law of nature, and as we have food, shall we not rather keep it while we have it, than risk having none, by allowing it to be exported on the mere chance of more coming in? If we permit those countries where the famine rages to buy up our grain, it can prove but a single meal to them, while it will be certain death to us."

Other members of the council held, that to shut Bombay against the export of grain, but to open it for imports, would be the very means of producing the calamity so much dreaded. "The instant you shut the port," said they, "all experience shows that the grain speedily rises to the famine price, and as this necessarily places it beyond the reach of the famishing crowds who are flying to this spot, which they believe, and not without reason, to be one of wealth and plenty, they will die in thousands amongst us. To feed the whole population for many months will be impossible, let us serve out the stock of provisions

as carefully as we please; for it will be out of the question to discriminate between our own proper inhabitants and the strangers whom the famine elsewhere has driven upon our resources. It will prove quite in vain to give notice that famine prevails here likewise; the natives of all the adjacent countries are too strongly impressed with an idea of our inexhaustible resources to believe any such assertions, and, in spite of all we can say or do, they will find their way here like flocks of wild-fowl."

"The only method," continued these experienced and vigorous-minded men, "to avert much of the evil, and, in the most genuine sense of the words, to extend our influence and popularity, by really doing good to the inhabitants of India, whether they be our immediate subjects or not, is to adopt at once the manly step of declaring that the port of Bombay shall not be shut under any circumstances. Let us give out that, come what may, the corn-merchants shall be at liberty, as heretofore, freely to export their grain whenever they conceive it most for their own interest to do so. At the same time, let us take every means to make our wants known in those parts of the country where there has been no failure of the crops. Indeed, this is hardly necessary; for the fact of an approaching famine in these regions has been already communicated to the remotest corners of the peninsula; and at this instant," said these gentlemen, "hundreds of vessels are probably taking in cargoes of grain for this coast. Now, as Bombay happens to be situated near the southern extremity of the districts which are threatened with famine, every one of these vessels must pass by us on their way to the gulfs of Cambay and Cutch; and if they be not deterred by our indiscreet legislation, every grain-ship will have an obvious interest in looking into this port. Our harbour is so easy of access, is so commodious, its anchorage dues are so light, and, above all, it lies so directly in the track of these vessels on their way to the famine countries, while it is a couple of hundred miles short of them, that the merchants must naturally wish to terminate their voyage here, if they can do so, with a fair profit on their adventure, rather than proceed so much farther to the north in search of a market.

"On the other hand, if we unwisely shut our port against exports, we shall deprive all these corn-ships of a free choice in this matter; and thus, while we selfishly forbid the export of grain, we may virtually be shutting ourselves out from its introduction at all. If we are merely to allow ships to bring in their corn, without permitting them to carry it away again when the market does not please them, we shall probably exclude them altogether. But if we boldly fling open our gates to all goers, as well as to all comers, and proclaim over India, that with us there shall be no restrictions whatsoever respecting the free export of grain, every vessel which comes near this great emporium of Western India will take a peep in, to learn what our prices are, and to make a calculation whether, upon the whole, it may not be the most profitable course to sell their cargo at Bombay for a much smaller sum of money, than to lose time, and incur other risks, in too greedily hunting for famine-prices along the shores of Guzerat."

Fortunately, the governor and council were finally agreed on this point, and it was decided to keep the port open. But although no further controversy took place at head-quarters, there was stirred up a vast deal of angry discussion out of the council-chamber. There soon arose also various strenuous opponents to the measure, more especially amongst the natives, who were exceedingly alarmed at the resolutions adopted by Government; and many of the leading merchants were constantly attacking, though in a friendly way, the chief secretary, Mr. Francis Warden. This gentleman, from being one of the most able, experienced, and kindest persons that ever exercised the high authority of his important station, was invariably appealed to by the natives of all parties. Such, indeed, had become their confidence, not only in his integrity and talents, but in his entire disinterestedness and fairness of purpose, that they often referred those questions to his decision upon which they were aware he differed from them; well knowing that his genuine public spirit would lead to his pronouncing a sound opinion, quite independently of any preconceived notions, or even previous declarations of his own.

I may mention, in passing, that this thorough reliance on the good faith of the persons who govern India is felt in all parts of the peninsula by the natives of every caste, and is one of the chief sources, if, indeed, it be not the very chief source, of our prodigious and permanent ascendency in the East. I had afterwards an opportunity of investigating on the spot some of the most curious and important branches of our complicated authority in India; and I trust I may one day be enabled to place several material parts of this apparent mystery in a clear and popular light.

The wealthy native merchants of Bombay remonstrated vehemently against a policy which had never before been adopted within their recollection. They even predicted, with much earnestness and alarm, the extension of the famine to the presidency of Bombay, and offered to throw in large supplies of grain, provided the Government would only engage to restrain the export. The cunning corn-dealers, who had set on these petitioners, knew right well that the abundance of imported grain would turn entirely upon the degree of freedom with which the port was left open for that quantity to overflow which was not required. What they wanted, in short, was the monopoly of the market; for they had good information as to the state of the crops in other places, and had calculated exactly the portion which might be introduced without lowering the price too much. All this was considered only fair matter of commercial speculation amongst the natives, if they could but succeed in persuading the Government to play into their hands.

In these semi-official discussions, the straightforward good sense of the secretary completely baffled the sophistry of the corn-dealers. He explained to a deputation of natives who had waited on him, that so long as there was no famine in Bengal, nor in those provinces south of Bombay whence its supplies of grain were generally drawn, the persons who had expressed so much anxiety about the possibility of a famine at the presidency might

rest assured that an unrestricted trade in corn was the wisest policy the Government could pursue, not only for the security of Bombay itself, but for the relief of the countries in the neighbourhood which were suffering from the famine. He likewise urged, that as it was the custom with the grain-dealers of the island always to keep one year's stock in store for the average home consumption of the place, they could themselves regulate the supply, the prices, and all the other details of the trade, much better than the Government, or any of the mercantile communities of Bombay. The natives at large, therefore, he added, might be quite sure, that, although the prices must, of course, during the famine, be higher than in ordinary times, the dealers, who knew their own interest, would take very good care to retain a sufficient supply for the consumption of the island.

Hormajee Bomanjee, the chief of the deputation, a Parsee of immense wealth, and a man of the highest character both amongst the English and the natives, shook his head, and declared he did not believe there was more than a day or two's supply of rice in the whole presidency. The secretary laughed at this, though he was not altogether without anxiety; for the imports, at first, by no means equalled what the Government had calculated upon, and the prices began to rattle up smartly. In the course of the week, however, fresh supplies poured into the island, and all further alarm on the score of a famine at Bombay was at an end.

The consequences which followed were in the highest degree important and satisfactory; for although the grain-merchants set about exporting rice in great quantities to the northward, the prices instantly fell at Bombay when the doubts were ended. It frequently happened, also, that when several vessels came into the harbour together, one or more of them actually tripped their anchor a few hours afterwards, on learning the prices, and sailed off to the north, in quest of a better market; while the others preferred landing their cargoes, and starting back for more, with the full intention, as they said, of looking in again as they passed.

I confess that it required no small faith in the soundness of these doctrines to witness the departure of well-freighted corn-ships, when we ourselves were on the very edge of starvation. Many men trembled who never quaked before; and the period between the positive decision of the Government and the full operation of this trial of the free trade principle was one of intense anxiety, even to those who felt surest of their ground.

It is fortunate for a country to have such men as Mr. Warden in high places, at moments when great dangers press on the state, and mere routines and etiquettes will no longer carry round in safety the machine of public affairs. It is then that the vigour of an intrepid thinker makes itself irresistibly felt, and reclaims that ascendency over ordinary minds which, in seasons of national repose and security, the mass of the people are too apt to disregard.

It is only necessary to add, on this branch of the subject, that as Bombay, during the whole of the season which followed, was filled with grain, it became literally, as had been anticipated, the granary of all that quarter of India. It is very seldom, I suppose, that measures of public economy can be made to square so happily with the practice of the passing hour; and on this account I have given the details somewhat at length, but exactly as they arose.

The effects of the famine which was desolating the neighbouring districts, soon made themselves visible at Bombay, by a very curious and painful sort of reflected, or rather what the opticians would call transmitted, light. We were living on that island in the midst of peace and plenty, while the territories north of us had become a prey to absolute want and the fiercest tumults, accompanied by bloodshed in every variety of shape. As each day broke, the wharfs and roads of our happy spot were lined with crowds of wretched, half-starved objects, who had with difficulty made their escape from the accumulated horrors of their own desolated homes. The whole of the eastern, or land side of Bombay, was strewed over with the dead and dying natives. I never saw misery on such an extensive scale, either before or since, except, perhaps, in some of the wretched villages of Spain, when the French dragoons had taught the poor inhabitants, at the edge of the sabre, to understand what the evils of war really are when brought close to their own altars and fire-sides.

What an important service might not that man render to England, who should make the people at large duly aware of the unspeakable advantages they have so long enjoyed in being exempted from the dreadful miseries of actual war, and its ghastly followers, pestilence and famine! How useful and how grateful, but, alas! how hopeless, the task of convincing the great mass of the present and future generations of this country, that almost all the sacrifices we have made in our own time, and are still making, as well as the share which our posterity will be called upon to contribute in theirs, are admirably bestowed in securing the matchless blessings we enjoy, and future ages of our descendants may continue to enjoy, far above all other nations.

I only wish that those people amongst us who doubt the efficacy of our establishments in church and state in preserving the national strength, and in maintaining the purity of virtuous practice, could see with their own eyes the effects of the absence of such institutions, and thus judge for themselves of their influence on human happiness. I think there might readily be pointed out, to the satisfaction of any reasonable advocate for speculative reform, scenes and circumstances in many countries whose boast, for example, it is to have no national debt, which would prove, that, in consideration of the annual payment of this comparatively trifling rental, as it may well be called, not only we, but all our posterity, are secured in the enjoyment of national and domestic blessings, such as no other country on earth is even in a slight degree acquainted with.

The most striking, and perhaps I may add most affecting, circumstance connected with this glimpse we had of the famine, was the marvellous patience, or what, in other lands, we should have called Christian resignation, of the unfortunate sufferers. I mixed amongst the natives constantly, and saw them exposed to every shade of distress, but never

heard a complaint, nor saw a gesture of impatience. And, what was still more extraordinary, immense groups of persons, actually dying of hunger, would sit round the fire on which the rice provided for them had been cooked, and there wait, with perfect composure, while the several messes were measured out and distributed to them; a process that often lasted more than an hour, during which their food lay but two or three feet from them, and quite within their grasp. It was curious to observe, also, during the whole period of this famine, that in several of the squares and other open spaces in the town, immense piles of rice were left exposed, night and day, for weeks together, without any guards; yet not a single bag was ever cut open.

I ought to have mentioned, that subscriptions to a considerable amount were made for the support of the starving multitude. And what was particularly interesting, the wealthy natives, the Banyans and Parsees in particular, opened a subscription amongst themselves, and purchased many thousands of bags of rice for the strangers, some weeks, or, at all events, a good many days, before the English residents came forward. This, however, was partly accidental, and partly caused by the natives having a more intimate acquaintance with the pressing nature and the extent of the distress. The two parties soon combined their exertions, and the native and English committees mutually assisted each other in this work of charity. Huge boilers were provided, under a picturesque tope, or grove, of cocoa-nut trees, about half a mile from the fort; and as a Hindoo, in general, will not eat a morsel of food, even to save his life, if it has been dressed by a person of a different caste, care was taken to provide cooks whose foreheads were marked with the proper streak of red or yellow paint, as the case might require. I myself repeatedly saw natives actually expiring of hunger, who refused the food presented to them, because a doubt existed as to the hands through which it had passed.

Exceptions did occur sometimes to the strictness of this rule, as I shall have occasion to state in describing the horrors of the countries where not merely scarcity and extensive illness prevailed, but where famine and pestilence swept away whole tribes. In those wretched districts immense masses of people were reduced to absolute starvation, and everything like laws or customs, old prejudices or old manners, appears to have been disregarded. Under such dreadful circumstances, the vehemence of hunger, and the excitement of despair, drove bodies of men into the commission of enormities which, in ordinary times, they would rather have died than have perpetrated singly.

I remember a story which made a great stir at Bombay; and, though involving something ludicrous along with much that is dreadful, it is too essentially characteristic to be omitted.

Eleven natives, belonging to one of the strictest of all the castes of Hindoos, were travelling from Cutch, through Guzerat, to Bombay. They had been driven out of their own country by the famine, and were flying to the south, in hopes of reaching territories not yet desolated. By the time they passed through the village of Bhownagur, the majority of the party were almost dead with hunger, sickness, and fatigue. On the outskirts of the town they fell in with a cow, when, instigated by the irresistible cravings of hunger, and reduced to the last stage of existence, they slaughtered the animal, and eagerly devoured the raw flesh. This proceeding will convey nothing very extraordinary or flagitious to European ears: but when it is recollected that over the whole of Hindustan the cow is held sacred, it will easily be conceived that killing and eating one of that species was an offence of the blackest dye. To taste beef in any shape, or under any circumstances, is likewise an unspeakable abomination in the eyes of the Hindoos; so that the guilt of these famishing wretches was considered of a double degree of atrocity.

No punishment short of death, it seems, could expiate such complicated enormity. Had they murdered one or two of their own party to assuage their hunger withal, possibly no particular notice would have been taken of the circumstance, considering the dreadful state to which they were reduced. But the deadly offence of killing a cow, an animal all but worshipped, was not to be forgiven! The Thakore, or chief of the village, therefore, immediately directed the whole of these eleven human beings to be executed on the spot!

All this might, perhaps, have passed off quietly, had not a curious question of local authority arisen between this orthodox native ruler and the British powers. As chief of an adjoining province, the Thakore was what is called (at the expense of a slight diplomatic contradiction in terms) an independent tributary; but being also a landholder under the British, it was thought by some that he might in that capacity have been held amenable to their jurisdiction. Bhownagur, it appears, was situated within the British sovereignty, and the chief was certainly guilty of an offence punishable by its laws. As the Government, however, fortunately for this over-zealous functionary's neck, had not yet distinctly marked the line of his allegiance as a landholder, no notice could be taken of this arbitrary act beyond a strong remonstrance on the subject, with an explicit warning against its repetition within the British territories. A regulation was also passed, declaring Mr. Thakore, in spite of his independence, fully amenable in future to the jurisdiction of our courts of law, as a landholder within our territories.

In the mean time, as the evils of the famine advanced, the governor in council at Bombay, with the wonted vigour and promptitude of East India Company's administration, not only assisted, by grants of money, the subscriptions raised to subsist the famishing natives who flocked to the presidency, but contributed another description of help which was very much wanted: I mean that of medicine and medical attendance. As pestilence invariably follows, if it does not accompany, famine, several great sheds, each I think a hundred yards long, were erected as hospitals on the smooth greensward lying just beyond the foot of the glacis, and reaching nearly across the esplanade or clear space in front of the northern line of the fortifications. Numerous surgeons, some military, and some belonging to the civil establishment, were called in from various out-stations, and placed in charge of these and other infirmaries, which were soon filled; for it was made a rule to reject

no one requiring medical aid. I often accompanied the gentlemen connected with these hospitals, and never went the melancholy round without seeing instances well calculated to excite interest in the Hindoo character. I shall never forget the touching effect produced by our encountering one day a pretty little girl, between five and six years old, who seemed quite adrift. We asked where her father was: she pointed to a crib on which her parent lay dead; and when questioned about her mother, she made a similar sign towards another figure, also dead! She had come, she believed, from the northern country, but whence she knew not exactly, neither could she tell her own name; nor had she, apparently, any other relations besides these two, who, it seems, had expired about an hour before.

I took such a feverish interest in the whole of this painful drama, too forcibly real, indeed, but still highly exciting, that I used to ride out early every morning, to watch the awful and picturesque scene which the opening day was always sure to expose to view. Along the road-side, particularly in the districts near the ferries, there lay scattered about many bodies of persons of all ages, who had sunk during the night; others we found just dying; and it happened not infrequently that we fell in with children, who, like the poor little girl in the hospital, having survived the whole of their kindred, were toddling about all unconscious of their desolate condition. At first sight it seemed strange that the youngest and weakest of the family should be the last to perish; but the reason probably was, that the parents may have deprived themselves of sustenance, in order to support these helpless things. This, I imagine, would happen in any country; but among a people, almost every act of whose lives is marked by self-denial, it seemed to follow as a matter of course. It was very consolatory to observe that these orphans were never left to wander about or to perish from want of care, but were always taken charge of by some of the natives of the caste to which their parents had belonged.

In the same way we observed that the bodies of those who had died of hunger, or disease, or fatigue, during the night, were carried away by the members of the same tribe; although, in most instances, there could have been no personal acquaintance between the parties, nor, indeed, any other means of ascertaining the caste to which they had belonged, than those painted marks on the forehead already alluded to.

These scattered bodies, as well as those of persons who died in the hospitals, or who expired from sickness or exhaustion, under the care of the natives, on different parts of the island, being straightway carried off to the beach of Back Bay, were there burned, according to the immemorial custom of the country. I am not quite sure, but I think all the different castes of Hindoos burn their dead: and although this method of disposing of the body after death is, on many accounts, repugnant to our notions of such things, it must be confessed that the ceremony itself includes much that is highly impressive, and not a little that is classical in its associations.

Few people know, probably, how soon and how readily a dead body may be consumed; and still fewer, I suspect, are aware that there remain at last of all this goodly frame, but a few ounces of white ashes.

"Expende Hannibalem: quot libras in duce summo Invenies?"

All the rest is sublimed, or carried off, in the shape of vapour, into the atmosphere, again to be returned in due season to the parent earth, to assist in the various processes of vegetative and animal life.

Although, of course, there was much to distress the feelings, and occasionally something to shock them, at the place selected by the natives to perform these last melancholy rites to their departed countrymen, after the picturesque custom of their forefathers, I could not resist the temptation of going frequently to witness their proceedings. Never shall I lose the recollection of these visits, nor the wild sort of interest with which I passed along the shore, amongst these innumerable funeral piles, and seldom failed to discover a multitude of new and curious objects all crowded into one spot. I generally went alone; for few, if any, of the English gentlemen with whom I was acquainted could comprehend what possible delight any one could take in seeing a number of black fellows burned. One friend, in particular, who, from his vehement curiosity in respect to everything else relating to the natives, I had reckoned upon for companionship and sympathy in these rambles, always failed me as we approached the bend of the coast round the turn of which the fires were blazing. He lived in a delightful house, in the woods, half way up the side of Malabar Hill, just beyond the Bay, and his course led him naturally near the shore; but in spite of all I could do, he always turned his horse's head inland at the separation of the roads, and made a circuit of a mile to avoid these scenes which excited me to such a pitch, that I could never resist their fascination.

Back Bay is formed by two projecting headlands; one, which is called Malabar Point, being high and thickly wooded; the other, named Colaba, is low, and broken into pretty islets, well-known to seamen by the few but conspicuous trees which distinguish them from the mainland, and still more by the splendid lighthouse near the southern extremity of this low and partially wooded spot. The shore, which, between the two points, takes a semi-circular sweep, is fringed by a flat beach of sand, immediately in front of a dense belt of cocoa-nuts. The trees in this grove stand so unusually close, that they afford shade to numerous straggling huts of the natives, which are so low as scarcely to be seen amongst the rich foliage of the underwood of plantains, limes, and figs. These, however beautiful in themselves, pretend to no rivalry in stature with the lordly cocoa, the most graceful, and, after all, perhaps the most truly characteristic member of the Eastern forest. It is quite a mistake to imagine its stem a mere tall straight pole, or to suppose that a grove of these singular trees resembles an overgrown fir-plantation, or the tiresome pine-barrens of America. I scarcely, indeed, remember to have seen one that was quite straight, or even exactly upright, or by any means uniform in size from the ground to the magnificent cluster of leaves spreading out at top. Every one must be familiar with the appearance of this tree who has seen the

drawings of those incomparable artists the Daniells, or of Baillie Fraser of the Himala mountains, draughtsmen of a kindred spirit, and possessed, in their respective walks, of a truly noble feeling for oriental scenery.

The stem of the cocoa-nut tree, it will be observed, generally starts from the ground with a thickness calculated apparently to give it a great degree of strength just at the point where, from the length of the lever above, it might most naturally be broken over. But this swell rapidly melts away into the more slender stem, or stalk, as it may almost be termed, which is often a little inclined to one side at first. It then becomes more upright, or bends again the other way, but always gently and gracefully. Towards the very top, before it reaches the great cluster of fruit lying under the leaves, the stem in general becomes larger, after which it is lost in the shade of the ever-splendid top. I hardly know if we ought in strictness to describe the upper part as composed of branches or of leaves; though it is more usual, I think, to speak of the long curving arms, which extend on all sides, as leaves. These, which vary in length from ten to twenty feet, closely resemble an ostrich feather in structure, being composed of a smooth, strong, gradually-tapering centre-piece, with subordinate leaves three or four feet in length growing from it on each side, and tapering in their form to the end, which is a sharp point. These lateral or small leaves become shorter and shorter towards the extremity of the branch. In the middle of all, at top, the young leaves may often be seen sprouting up, green and vigorous, and all ready to bend over to the right and left in their turn. Occasionally, a good deal of what a sketcher loves to call spirit is given to the picture by the forlorn condition of a branch, which has either been broken by the wind, or injured by some accidental cut of the Tari or toddy-gatherer's knife. Such a branch, of course, speedily withers, and hangs down its head in perpendicular lines, singularly contrasted in colour and in form with the living foliage and graceful curves forming the rest of this magnificent bunch of court plumes.

Although the funeral piles of the poor Hindoos possess none of the splendour with which the classical imagination delights to paint such things, they are sufficiently interesting, and might furnish many hints for an artist like Turner, whose grand picture of Rizpah watching the dead bodies has often recalled to my thoughts the scenes of this famine. For many an hour I have stood looking at the groups of natives as they emerged from the grove, bearing along the remains of a friend, or of some unknown countryman of their particular caste, found dead by the road-side, or who had expired in the hospital. While some of the party employed themselves in washing the body in the sea, others erected an oblong pile, between one and two feet high, and five or six long, out of short blocks or billets of firewood, on which the famine-stricken form being laid, it was covered over with a few additional pieces of fuel. I have no distinct recollection of any ceremonies or religious rites being performed by the Hindoos upon this occasion. As soon as the fire was kindled, the natives squatted on the sand, close to the pile, on the windward side, and they generally preserved the most perfect silence. I never observed in any of their countenances the slightest appearance of what we should call emotion; indeed, the most characteristic point I remember about the Hindoos, is tranquillity under every degree of suffering. On watching with attention the progress of the flames, I remarked that, after a time, the unctuous parts even of the most wasted of these bodies, as they dropped down piecemeal, assisted materially in their own conflagration. Whenever, by the action of the flames, the several limbs fell asunder, the parts were carefully replaced on the fire by the attendants, with a wonderful degree of indifference or of composure; I hardly know which to call it. I have frequently threaded my way amongst a hundred of these funeral piles blazing away at once, each attended by a party of the natives consisting of four or five men, but without hearing a single word spoken.

In ordinary times, the deaths in Bombay may be taken at 17 daily, or 1 for every 9687 persons, making the annual mortality about 6205, or 1 for every 26½ inhabitants. During the famine, the additional deaths in Bombay exceeded 15 a-day, the whole mortality then varying between 30 and 40 daily. Sometimes the numbers amounted to three or four times as many, when accidental circumstances augmented the arrivals from the famine countries.

The periods of the day when I visited this strange scene were either in the morning, when the damp land wind was just dying away into a calm, or in the afternoon, when the delicious sea-breeze still blew freshly home to the bottom of the bight, waving the plumes of the cocoa-nuts in fine style. In the morning the bay, not only within the two points, but quite out to the horizon, remained as smooth as a sheet of glass, without even a ripple large enough to break audibly on the sand; and as no swell rolled in from the offing, the sea, at such moments, lay so perfectly still, that all the surrounding objects on the shore, as well as those resting on the surface of the water, became reflected with a degree of sharpness in every respect like the originals.

The funeral piles being placed just within the margin of the beach, at the very water's edge, and fringing the shore, there rose up, in the most striking manner, nearly at equal intervals, a hundred pillars of smoke, as it were guarding the coast; or like tall columns stretching their heads into the air, many times higher than the highest trees of the dark, thickly-planted tope, or grove, further inland, not a single leaf of which seemed now in motion.

What added something of a mysterious and unearthly character to this solemn scene, was its perfect silence. Scarcely a sound could be heard along the whole shore, though within the space of a mile many hundreds of persons might be seen flitting about. Had it not been for the frequent splash, as another and another dead body was dipped in the sea, or a low word or two escaping from the natives as they arranged the pile on which the corpse was to be consumed, or the crackling of some fire fanned into more brisk action than the rest by a casual flaw of wind whisking in from the bay, the whole might have passed for a ghost-like vision. As I moved up and down the melancholy beach, I passed ap-

parently as totally unnoticed by the natives as if I had been invisible. On every side I could see indistinctly through the smoke and flames, heads, and arms, and half-destroyed bodies, falling down and mingling in a confused heap with the blazing faggots, each pile being surrounded and kept in order by a group of silent, ghastly, hunger-worn Hindoos. It became difficult at times not to fancy the whole scene a mere delusion of the senses!

Adjacent to this fearful spectacle, I remarked a small, but striking circumstance, which, without dissipating these dreamy kind of fancies, brought forcibly to my mind the extent of the calamity by which that part of India was then so dreadfully scourged. In ordinary times, when the average number of deaths at Bombay is seldom so great as twenty a day, the current supply of fire-wood in the bazaar is sufficient for all the funeral piles of the natives. But when the terrible famine of 1812 extended its ravages over Marwar, Cutch, and Guzerat, and other states lying to the northward, and the crowds of half-starved miserable Hindoos rushed to the presidency, many of them only to die, the demand for fire-wood was so great, that it became a profitable speculation to import fuel from a distance in this express view. There might always be seen, accordingly, a long line of coasting vessels, at a few hundred yards from the beach of Back Bay, anchored abreast of the fires, which never ceased to blaze night or day. These boats were loaded half-mast high with faggots and billets of timber, cut to the proper length, and well dried for the occasion.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE PLAGUE OF LOCUSTS.

WHAT we saw of the remote effects of the great famine which desolated the north-western parts of India, we had good reason to fear gave scarcely any idea of the dreadful misery which pervaded the actual scene of the calamity. For whatever may happen elsewhere, plenty and prosperity of every kind hold their permanent head-quarters at the British presidencies, as Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay, the three seats of Government, are called. Although we certainly witnessed distress enough to give a high and painful interest to the passing events, the suffering we beheld must have formed only a petty episode in the great tragedy. So little, indeed, were the effects of the famine considered of engrossing importance at Bombay, that the ordinary amusements and occupations of the natives, as well as those of strangers, went on just as if neither famine nor pestilence had been known in the neighbouring states. Crowds of dying wretches, who poured into the island daily from the province of Kattiwar and elsewhere, were soon lost sight of in the rich and benevolent population of Bombay. I really believe, that if their numbers had been ten times greater, the vast resources of that wonderful little spot, which hardly occupies the breadth of a pin's head on the map of India, would still have outstretched the occasion.

But in Guzerat itself, the unhappy region of the actual famine, the case appears to have been very different. There the persons almost in absolute want of food formed a large majority of the population, in a country destitute of the means of procuring subsistence, and not, as at Bombay, a small minority in a district abounding with resources. It may well be supposed, also, that the scenes which occurred in those devoted countries partook but little, if at all, of the picturesque though melancholy interest which engaged our attention so deeply at a distance. I remember, upon one occasion, expressing in rather strong terms the excitement, and almost the gratification, I had experienced, on witnessing some occurrence connected with a party of more than half-famished natives, who had just arrived after many days' march, during which their numbers had been reduced from several hundreds to a few dozens. A gentleman, who had been living in the countries from whence these people were recently driven out by sheer famine, shook his head, and remarked, that if I had only seen for one hour the horrors which he had been compelled to witness for weeks and months together, I would do everything I could to drive their recollection from my mind, instead of courting fresh sights as a source of picturesque curiosity.

From this gentleman, and others, I learned various particulars of the famine, which certainly altered the character of the interest I had felt at first in the events passing under our own eyes at Bombay. We are apt, perhaps, to hear of such things without receiving much of the instruction which assuredly they are intended to convey; and I am tempted to repeat, that if we merely read of wars and famines, but all the while live in peace and plenty, we necessarily gain a very imperfect conception of the blessings we enjoy. If there could only be described, however, in adequate terms, a few of the miseries actually witnessed by travellers in different parts of the world, arising obviously out of the absence of those very circumstances which the home-croakers amongst us consider as evils, and so recklessly wish removed, not a few persons might be reconciled 'rather to bear those ills they have, than fly to others that they know not of!' Yet this is perhaps a vain attempt; since it may be observed, that the authority of an eye-witness of distant scenes of misery, whether they spring from misgovernment, from the accidents of the climate, or from any other cause, seldom goes for more than the mere passing interest of his story, while ninety-nine in every hundred of his hearers adopt the good old schoolboy rule, 'and skip the moral.'

Most people in England know nothing of locusts, except what they read of them in Scripture; and even in India their habits are not generally understood. I remember meeting a gentleman, who told me that, during fifteen years' residence in the East, he had only seen locusts three times; once on the wing, and twice dressed in a curry. For my part, I never saw them at all, except in a museum; but I have conversed with persons who have seen them in all their mischievous glory. Their flights are described as resembling a heavy snow-storm, only black, and sending forth a rustling noise from millions of billions of wings, and sweeping along like a deluge in the air for three times twenty-four hours together.

Captain Beaufort, with whose interesting and delightful book on Caramania every reader of travels is familiar, told me that, when he lay at

Smyrna, in 1811, he had an opportunity of forming a rude estimate of the magnitude of a flight of locusts, which was drifting past from south to north. The consul had occasion to send a messenger in a due easterly direction, to the Bashaw of Sardis, in Asia Minor, that is, in a course at right angles to the flight of locusts. This person rode forty miles before he got clear of the moving column of these ravenous animals. It was inferred, from observations made with a pocket telescope, that the height of the column could not be less than three hundred yards, and the rate at which it passed not slower than seven miles an hour. This continued for three days and nights, apparently without intermission! As these insects succeeded one another, at an average distance of not more than three feet, and were about one foot apart above one another, it was computed, that the lowest number of locusts in this enormous swarm must have exceeded 168,608,563,200,000.

The mind, however, is strained to no purpose in trying to conceive such vast sums; it is like endeavouring to judge of the distance of the fixed stars, or the velocity of the sun's rays. When we are told that light moves over a space of 192,000 miles in a second, we are quite bewildered: but if we learn, that in the same interval it would pass round the earth eight times, we have something to rest upon not altogether beyond the reach of our thoughts.

In the same way, in order to assist the imagination, Captain Beaufort determined, that the locusts he saw, if formed into a heap, would have exceeded in magnitude more than a thousand and thirty times the largest pyramid of Egypt; or, if they had been placed on the ground close together, in a band of a mile and an eighth in width, it would have encircled the globe*!

My acquaintance with Cocker having become a little rusty, I found myself at a loss to state the above huge sum in words; but, in order to avoid mistakes, I wrote to one of the most distinguished astronomers and computers of this country, to beg he would enlighten my ignorance. His answer is as follows:

"There is some difference between the French and English in their notation of millions.

"We class our numbers into periods of six, ascending in the order of thousands, millions, billions, trillions, &c. Thus, your 15 figures would be

Billions. Millions. Thousands.
168,608563,200000.

"The French class their numbers by periods of three, ascending in the order of hundreds, thousands, millions, billions, &c. So that the same 15 figures would be called by them

Trillions. Billions. Millions. Thous. Hundreds.
168, 608, 563, 200, 000."

As we have been dabbling with billions and millions, I may take occasion to mention, that the prodigious sum above written is only about a fourth part as great as that which the undulations of light have been demonstrated to make in one second of time; viz. 600,000,000,000,000†!

* For some further details respecting this extraordinary flight of locusts, see an excellent little work called "Bertha's Visit to her Uncle in England," p. 318.

† Herschel's Treatise on Light.

There is some reason for supposing it not impossible that this was merely the tail of the flight, the desolating effect of whose march, in countries lying much further to the eastward than the Holy Land, I am now about to describe.

Myriads of these destructive insects appeared in the eastern provinces of Bengal about the beginning of 1810, from whence they took a north-westerly course across what is properly called Hindustan, including the upper provinces of India, but not the peninsula geographically so termed. In 1811 they first attacked the great district of Marwar, and then coasted along the edge of the western deserts of India. It so chanced that the annual fall of rain either failed entirely, or was so scanty in that year, that the locusts found it easy work to strip the country of every blade of vegetation. As soon as this was accomplished, they proceeded in a body to the north-west district of Guzerat, named Puttun, and from thence scoured the province of Kattiwar. On one occasion only they made their way as far south as the city of Baroach, on the right or northern bank of the river Nerbudda, a mighty stream which empties itself into the gulf of Cambay, a degree and a half south of the tropic, and about three degrees of latitude, or sixty leagues, north of Bombay. Beyond this point the locusts were not known to extend in a southerly direction; and by the commencement of the monsoon of 1812 this dreadful plague vanished from the face of that wretched country; but whence it came, or where it proceeded to, is not known; though, as I have hinted above, it may possibly have been no more than a detachment from this very flight which Captain Beaufort saw at Smyrna.

The destruction in Guzerat effected by these insects was almost universal. In the latter part of 1811 the whole of the western part of the province was covered, to every appearance, with rich cultivation, though, when the crops were examined, the grain was found to be gone, and merely the stalks left, as if these had been unworthy of notice. Then came the failure of rain already alluded to in Marwar; when the drought co-operating with these abominable locusts, drove the unfortunate inhabitants of that country, in a huge living wave, tumultuously into the Guzerat territory. At first the condition of the wretched outcast Marwarees was rather improved by this change; but misery soon followed their untoward steps; for in 1812 Guzerat also experienced a failure of rain, which well nigh demolished the crops in those districts that the locusts had not visited. The demands upon the resources of the country were thus doubled, when the means of supply were reduced to one-tenth part of their average amount; and in many places there was literally no crop at all.

A very graphic account of this famine is given by Captain Carnac, in the Transactions of the Literary Society of Bombay, vol. I. article XIX.; to which I must refer for many interesting particulars. He describes the result in strong and distinct language. "The enhanced price of grain added to the apprehensions of the inhabitants, which impelled them to store their individual resources in times of such danger; and the villanies practised by the higher classes, to derive pecuniary advantage from the pressing wants of the people, soon reduced the half-famished emi-

grants to the greatest privations. The endurance of hunger was supported, however, by the Marwaree people with unaccountable pertinacity, which in some degree blunted the natural feelings of sympathy in their lot. Whether the ready assistance rendered to these people, on their first entrance into Guzerat, had induced them to imagine, that under no circumstances would the hand of charity be withdrawn; or whether it was from the innate indolence of their character, or the infatuation which often accompanies the extremes of misfortune, that they rejected the certain means of subsistence by labour, it is notorious, that when the benevolent tendered employment to these people, it was uniformly declined, even with the certainty of death being the consequence of the refusal."

The account which all writers agree in giving of the scenes that speedily followed is almost too horrible to be repeated. Multitudes of the Marwar people, who, after suffering severely from famine in their own country, had wandered into Guzerat, were seen crowded, like cattle, in droves, beyond the suburbs of all the great towns, or by the road-sides, the dead and the dying together, men, women, and children, packed, as it were, in one mass, perishing of hunger, and almost all of them suffering under acute diseases, brought on by fatigue and want. Of these the confluent small-pox was the most general, and committed incalculable ravages, not only amongst these starving multitudes, but amongst the people into whose territories they were urged by the pressure of despair.

There was one little picture in the narrative of this dreadful scene which always struck me as being peculiarly touching; I mean the unavailing struggles of the infants to draw sustenance from the exhausted breasts of their starving mothers! As a pendant to this, Captain Carnac describes another afflicting, but, upon the whole, less painful incident, which he likewise witnessed in person. A poor woman lay stretched by the side of a heartless group of her countrymen of the Marwar land, who would not spare her one drop of water, though she was herself dying, and her dead infant reposed on her breast!

The hourly recurrence of such accumulated miseries familiarised the minds of these poor people, as well as the natives in general, to every extremity of suffering which human nature could bear. "In a short time," adds Captain Carnac, "those emanations of individual feeling among themselves, which distinguished the first commencement of their sufferings, gradually abated, and the utmost indifference universally predominated." We are naturally disposed to feel more for the children than for the grown-up persons on these occasions; but in one of the dreadful group of anecdotes related by Captain Carnac, we hardly know which to sympathise most with, the parent or the infant. "I saw a child," he tells us, "not quite dead, torn away by a pack of dogs from its mother, who, unable to speak or move, lay with anxious eyes directed to the object of her fond affection. It was pursued by its former little playmates, who had shared in its extreme adversity; but the ravenous animals (which had acquired an extraordinary degree of ferocity from having fed on human bodies) turned upon these innocents, and displayed their mouths and teeth discoloured with the blood of the child. A rescue was, of course, attempted by ourselves; but the remains of life had been destroyed."

It is exceedingly curious that those feelings and prejudices which the Hindoos, in a state of ease and affluence, would assuredly not have resigned but with their lives, appear to have lost their power when the natives fell under the pressure of extreme and protracted distress. I must quote Captain Carnac's own words for what followed this relinquishment of their national and almost proverbial fortitude. This testimony on a point of some importance in national manners is particularly valuable, from its being given as the result of actual observation.

"Distinctions of caste were preserved," he says, "until the moment when the hand of adversity bore heavy; then the Brahmin sold his wife, his child, sister, and connexions, for the trifle of two or three rupees, to such as would receive them!"

The number of the wretched Marwarees who died at Baroda alone was often five hundred in one day; but what is interesting on many accounts is, that in spite of the reduced means of the opulent natives of Guzerat, they subscribed their money freely to assist their countrymen as well as these wretched strangers. The native governments in those provinces also subscribed very large sums of money for the relief of the famishing multitude. I have mentioned, that at Bombay nothing could exceed the calmness or patience with which the crowds of half-starved strangers waited till it came to their turn to be fed. But in the north, where the famine raged in earnest, and where, as I have before mentioned, the hungry part of the population were in a large majority, this forbearance disappeared.

"It was a cruel sight," says Captain Carnac, "to those possessed of sensibility, to witness the struggles when the doors were opened to apportion the victuals. Every sentiment of humanity appeared to have been absorbed by the crowds collected around; and it was no unusual thing to be informed, that such and such a number had fallen a sacrifice to their precipitate voracity: many, also, whose wants had been supplied, continued to devour until the means intended for their relief proved, in the end, their destruction in a few hours. Children were often crushed to death, when attending for their pittance of food, under the feet of their own parents.

"The establishment of which I have been speaking was imitated in most of the principal towns in Guzerat, and added a few months of life to a class of beings reserved for greater miseries: indeed, subsequent events would seem to show that these people were marked for total annihilation, and that in their destruction the inhabitants of this country were to be deeply involved."

I have already had occasion to mention, that at Bombay the natives paid the utmost respect to the funeral rites, so to call them, of their deceased friends, and even of those who had no other claims upon them but such as were common to the caste to which they belonged. But all this attention to the dead appears to have vanished, along with every spark of sympathy for the dying, in Guzerat. The bodies of the poor Marwarees who had expired during the famine were left unheeded on

the spot where they had sunk; and this total apathy, Captain Carnac is of opinion, was the chief cause of the contagion experienced in 1812, and the consequent extensive mortality. At Baroda, the seat of government, there was still authority and civil discipline enough to insure either the burial or the burning of the dead, although the numbers who had perished daily amounted at one time to upwards of five hundred. At Ahmedabad, however, the mortality was so enormous that these precautions were impossible. No fewer than one hundred thousand persons died in this city alone, or nearly a half of the entire population. "The demand for wood to burn the dead called for the destruction of the houses; even this was barely sufficient for the performance of the rites required by the Hindoo faith; and the half-consumed bodies on the banks of the Saburmuttee evince at this hour (February 1815, or two years and a half afterwards) to what straits the Hindoos were reduced in fulfilling the last duties to their kindred."

It is also stated, that in the latter periods of the famine many females were engaged in removing the dead, and committing them to the piles. In this there appears nothing extraordinary, however painful it be to European ears; but we learn incidentally, from the remark of the writer, how exceedingly repugnant such a practice must be to Indian habits, since he considers it worth while to mention it as a kind of climax to the intolerable miseries caused by the famine. The inference from this fact seems also to be, that women, under such circumstances, retain their strength and fortitude longer than men. It is said, likewise, that in all parts of the country, with the exception of Ahmedabad, the Mahometan population did not suffer so severely as the Hindoos, an advantage ascribed to their use of animal food; and yet at Kaira the Europeans suffered still more than either Mahometans or Hindoos. The melancholy fact, however, pervading all these terrible scenes appears to be, that during seasons of famine, pestilential diseases of every description are far more rife than at any other time, and that all the ordinary causes of mortality are then urged into tenfold action. The periodical insalubrity of the climate of Guzerat after the rainy season is well known, and cannot be counteracted; but, unfortunately, it would seem that it may readily be augmented. The deaths, accordingly, over the province at large, during the visitation above described, were as ten to one above the average!

It seems to have been impossible to draw any thing like a correct estimate of the destruction amongst the expatriated Marwarees; but some idea may be formed of the severity with which that unhappy country was scourged, when an impartial eye-witness, possessed of the best means of information, considers it probable that ninety-nine in every hundred perished! The following extract, which winds up the account of these fearful calamities, may serve to show that we have not been describing the worst parts of the famine; for that in another province the destruction caused by the locusts was still greater than in Guzerat.

"The influx of a large proportion of the population of a country yielding an annual revenue of £500,000 cannot be accurately ascertained. The emigrants arrived in detached bodies, and, for the purpose of convenience, spread themselves over the face of Guzerat, from the borders of the gulf of Cutch to Surat, in many instances even flocking from ports on the coast to Bombay, which they were enabled to do in consequence of native chiefs and opulent merchants granting them passages free of charge. It should be observed, however, that the larger proportion of people who resorted to the presidency (of Bombay) were from Kattiwar, which suffered from the want of rain, and the ravages of locusts, in a much greater degree than the province of Guzerat.

"It is also out of my power," adds Captain Carnac, "to give any certain account of the number of Marwarees who perished in the famine. I have seen in an evening's ride in the suburbs of this town of Baroda, in which every practicable means for saving them were benevolently exercised, not less than fifty bodies scattered around, which the servants of Government had not time to inter. I would therefore, from a review of all the circumstances related, be inclined to estimate, that not more than one in a hundred of these poor creatures ever returned to their native country*."

CHAPTER XXII.

INDIAN NOTCH. THROWING THE COCOA-NUT.

We hear the fatal truth, that "in the midst of life we are in death," repeated so often, and in such a variety of tones, that our ear becomes accustomed to the sound, without its arresting the attention. The warning accordingly produces but little effect upon our thoughts, and still less upon our conduct. Such being the case, it may often prove highly useful to seize upon such accidental circumstances as those described in the last chapter, in order to turn them to account, as illustrations of maxims of which no one can be said actually to doubt the truth, but to which few attach much importance, or only such as goes, practically, for little or nothing.

By a strange kind of obliquity, however, in our moral vision, it would appear that the direct view of such instruction as we may find in the beautiful text above quoted is not always the most efficacious. For example, it must be confessed (and I suppose we ought to own it with shame) that we may witness even the effects of a famine without many other feelings being excited than that of intense curiosity. At all events, I fear it never occurred to me at the time to extract any moral lesson out of the wholesale work which death was then making before my eyes, till an accident induced me to turn the picture round, and I then speculated to some purpose on the reverse view which presented itself to the imagination. One day, after having passed several hours amongst the starving, dying, and burning Hindoos, I returned home strangely interested with the work of destruction; and while repeating the verse quoted above, and cudgelling my brains to extract something solemn out of the text, in order to subdue the high flow of spirits into which the novelty of this scene had thrown me, a friend called, and carried me off with him to a native dance, or

* Bombay Transactions, vol. i. p. 303.

notch, given by a well-known Persian nobleman, named Mohamed Ally Khan, then resident at Bombay. It is odd enough, that this brilliant spectacle, intended for the express purpose of driving away care, as it is called, should have caused at once the very feeling of melancholy which all the horrors of the morning had failed to excite.

On recently examining a set of long-forgotten memorandums and letters written at Bombay twenty years ago, during the progress of the scenes described in the preceding pages, I was more struck than I appear to have been when writing them, with the extraordinary mixture of incidents one would have supposed every way harrowing to the feelings, with gay ceremonies and amusements, apparently quite incompatible with each other. I find stories of death by absolute hunger and pestilence jumbled up with dinner-parties—records of Hindoo burnings, with descriptions of evening parties—feastings, and flirtations, side by side with hospital-practice, and questions on the corn-laws! Then follow long pages of rapture about oriental scenery, strewed over with a wild sort of youthful curiosity concerning native manners, dresses, and other customs, all so much crowded before me at the same moment, and in one little spot on the earth's surface, that I appear scarcely to have known how to spread them out, or how to select them. Besides all which, I find that at the time when the feelings which those interesting objects excited, from their novelty and combination, were at their height, the power to do them any justice in expression was deplorably wanting. This sort of retrospective glance naturally makes a traveller often wish he could pass again through scenes, of which he discovers he knew not the value till too late, but which he is always vain enough to fancy he could now describe much better.

My worthy friend Mohamed Ally could not speak one word of English, nor I a word of Persian; nevertheless we got on mighty well, chiefly by the aid of a smoking apparatus called a killian, which hardly differs from the well-known hookah, with eternal accounts of which old Indians are so apt to weary Europeans. The secret of the sedative or complacent power of this charming variety of the pipe lies, I suspect, fully as much in the guggle-guggle-guggling noise made by the smoke in passing through the water, as in the celestial sort of semi-intoxication produced by the fumes of the tobacco and other fragrant herbs of which the glorious 'chillums' of the East are composed. Of course, all ladies abuse the use of tobacco, though, perhaps, only because they dare not indulge in it themselves. Indeed, when we look at the tranquil ecstacy and complete self-satisfaction of an Irish female porter in Covent Garden market, with a pipe, as black as her hand, one inch in length, clinging to the corner of her mouth, can we venture to assert, that any rank, station, or wealth, in the community, boasts of a commensurate degree of luxury?

Wine, and other generous fluids, right joyous though they be in their incipient effects, generally exact such a swingeing compound interest for their advances, in the shape of headachs and heartachs, duels, dyspepsias, and the devil hardly knows what besides, that I question if there is any man come to that period of life lying a little beyond the season woefully miscalled the 'years of discretion,' who looks back with unmixed satisfaction to his wine-bibbing days. But it is quite another affair with the 'virtuous tobacco.' I feel so distinctly upon this point, that I could almost set down in regular order, every pipe, hookah, killian, and cigar, I have whiffed since I first went to sea, and all without one pinch of remorse. Who, I wonder, could make a similar pangless enumeration of the cups he has quaffed? Through the charming vapour which rises before the half-shut eyes of my imagination, when recalling past scenes of smoking, I can rediscover hundreds upon hundreds of tranquil hours of as complete happiness as the nature of our clay is capable of enjoying. Athwart the curling mists of past pipes I see again friends long since parted, and gone either to other lands, or to another world, but still present to those early thoughts as freshly as ever. In the rising tobacco-clouds I may also see reflected to memory's eye groups of turbaned heads, endless towering pagodas, rich groves of cocoa-nut trees, and the tall minarets of foreign climes, and false religions, all bright as when I first gazed upon them! I hear once again the deep, half-throttled guttural voice of the Arab, the mellow richness of the Malay dialect (that Italian of the East), or listen in fancy to the sharp scolding note of the merry Chinese. The aromatic perfume of the Havannah cigars, so well named by the Dons 'puros,' I can almost recall to my senses now by the mere remembrance of its delicious fragrance; and as my fancy puffs away, I imagine myself still exchanging courtesies with the stately Spaniards, who certainly are amongst the pleasantest of men, whether we hold converse with them in the streets of Corunna, in the red-hot quadras of Lima, the silver-gated city of the kings, or, farther off still, in the famous port of Acapulco, so redolent in every sailor's memory of 'Oro y Plata,' and in visions of those charming Manilla galleons, never, never, again to be our prizes! I add nothing of the innumerable jollifications and happy merry-meetings amongst our own countrymen and messmates, with which the retrospect of every true-blue voyager or traveller must be filled, or, I may say, hallowed, in union with the smoke of tobacco, in every latitude and longitude of this excellent round world of ours, which, the more I see and learn to appreciate, the more and more I continue to delight in.

It is the easiest thing possible to deride and abuse those indulgences which we either do not relish, or cannot command, or which are unsuitable to our station, sex, or circumstances, or, finally, which we can no longer partake of. When, therefore, we observe people turning up their noses at the approach of a row of happy bricklaying Pats, with a volcano at the corner of their respective dusty countenances, or hear some worn-out moralist expressing great horror at a yacht-club dandy with a cigar in his cheek, we feel an involuntary assurance that these fastidious objectors are then making a private bargain with their own selfishness, for compounding with their delicate consciences

——— "for sins they are inclined to,
By damning those they have no mind to."

Smoking, like tippling, "or any other sort of exercise," as poor Beppo says, may be carried so far as to convert the indulger into a mere chafing-dish. In the midshipmen's berth, (that fountain-head of strong terms and apt similes,) such determined smokers are compared to those formidable combustibles used in fire-ships, called 'Beelzebubs,' of which the chief ingredients are brimstone and gunpowder. But if tobacco-smoke be only used in due moderation, and in a gentlemanlike spirit, it may lighten many a weary hour of toil and pain, illuminate the fancy of literature, unravel the intricacies of science; subdue the exacerbations of passion, and help to brighten and mellow many a friendly meeting, which, but for its slight and transient exhilaration, might have passed coldly and drearily enough. I can even remember instances of meetings, from which every kindly feeling was expected to be banished, turn out most cordially, merely from the well-timed distribution of a handful of first-rate cigars amongst men who knew their value, but hardly hoped to be so blessed as to possess such treasures. The vulgarity of a bribe, put into the shape of gold or silver, shocks all but the coarsest minds; while the well-managed offer of a trifle often conveys wishes, and excites interests, or even lays the foundations of substantial good-will, more firmly than services infinitely higher could procure; from the rudest savages, accordingly, amongst the red men of the Arkansaw and Missouri, to the most polished Asiatic, the magical influence of tobacco-smoke is recognised. Indeed, I am half persuaded that the conferences and protocol meetings of our European diplomacy would get on much more smoothly if every congress were provided with a good store of pipes and pigtail! As it is, are not the negotiators obliged to borrow the aid of this wonderful plant in another shape, and exchange snuff-boxes?

Be all this as it may, I had certainly no objection to my friend Mahomed Ally's killian, when I found myself seated on his thickly-matted and trebly-carpeted floor at Bombay, in the days of my youth, before the poverty of my head and stomach (and not my will!) had compelled me to abandon smoke, and all other good things save the Hindoo diet of rice and water. Chairs there were none; but to relieve the fatigue of sitting on the ground, a profusion of hard, well-stuffed, and richly-covered pillows, of different sizes and shapes, lay scattered about on the floor. The Chinese, I think, are the only nation in the East who use chairs, tables, and sofas, like those of Europe. I must say, however, that although it is amusing enough, for a time, to loll or roll about on the floor, in the midst of a pile of bolsters, it soon becomes very tiresome practice. The Persians generally kneel, and, with their feet close together, sit on their heels, so that the soles of their feet are turned nearly upwards. This posture is said to become, after a time, a very easy and convenient one, though Europeans find it intolerably painful at first, perhaps from the *tightness* of their dress, compared to the looseness of that worn by Asiatics. I observed that all the company, except ourselves, left their shoes or slippers at the door, and I felt rather disappointed at not being obliged to conform to the customs of the country: this, however, our host would not allow us to think of; but he made no objection to our removing our hats, though he himself and his countrymen kept on their turbans.

After puffing away for a short while, we were presented with a little cup of coffee, holding about as much as would fill a couple of thimbles, but including the essence of two or three dishes of such diluted stuff as we drink in these degenerate longitudes. The coffee was as black as ink, and so rich in flavour, that it instantly filled the apartment with the most delicious aroma. It was potent, too, in another sense, and produced a slight degree of exhilaration in the spirits, just enough to set the fancy off in quest of similar meetings in the Arabian Nights. It required but little help to complete the picture, for everything was strictly in character with those happily-described scenes, which establish such a strong hold on our young imaginations, that the presence of the reality only brightens their lustre. Disappointment on this subject there can hardly be much, in the mind of any man not the crustiest and least easily pleased of his species. The descriptions contained in those fairy tales may be compared to the landscapes of a good painter—not servile copies either of individual forms, or of the accidental tints of nature, but judiciously selected and harmonised groups, coloured in such a way as to remove all that is vulgar in mere reality, and yet to retain much of what is essentially picturesque; the result being better, and more true to general nature, or, at all events, more pleasing, than the detached scenes themselves.

The fantastic tales alluded to are extremely apt to assume, in our fancy, the place of the originals; while the realities, when we come actually to look at them, appear like pictures. I, at least, for my part, was so completely under the influence of this delusion, or poetical 'mirage,' that I could scarcely manage, even to the last period of my stay in India, to put things in their proper places. I seldom took a walk in the bazaar, or visited a native's house, without thinking of some fairy tale from which the incidents appeared to have been expressly got up; and, in like manner, I hardly ever passed a Hindoo's hut, before which a swarthy turbaned inhabitant of the East was whirling round the potter's wheel, without having my thoughts carried back to some of those beautiful narrations of Scripture, which fasten themselves so early and so firmly on our minds.

I had once the good fortune, as I must ever consider it, to see a workman accidentally break the pot which had cost him no small trouble to fashion. He immediately collected the fragments, dabbed the clay together again, and, with the industry of an ant, set about the re-construction of his vessel. As the whole process recalled an illustration I remembered to have seen used somewhere in the Old Testament, I set about hunting for the passage, and was delighted to find what I had just witnessed most graphically represented in the following text:—

"The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there will I cause thee to hear my words. Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels; and the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter; so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it.

Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying, O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel* !"

Mahomed Ally's party proved to be a 'Notch' or dance, where the company, unlike that of a European ball, took no share in the performance: instead of dancing, we were danced to; and, what is more, were sung to by one and the same person. The performer was a celebrated dancing-girl, well known in Western India, of great wealth and talents in the line of her art, which was as different as can be conceived, in all respects, from that displayed at the ballets of our hemisphere. In the first place this figurante was encumbered with huge piles of dress, so much stiffened by embroidery, formed of gold and silver threads crossing its texture, that the folds stuck out nearly at right angles from her waist, and hung so low down that even her ankles were entirely hid. The shoulders, likewise, and breast, being totally eclipsed by endless folds of cloth, wound round her in such quantities, the only wonder was, how she contrived to move at all under the load. I forget in what taste her head-gear was arranged; but well remember that her nose was pierced like that of a sow, with an immense gold ring, and that her face and hair shone with cocoa-nut oil, like a new dollar. Her feet were bare, and she wore no gloves on her hands, while both ankles and wrists were concealed beneath the multitude of rings or bangles by which they were encircled. I believe bells were attached to the good lady's legs; but this fact we could not ascertain by actual observation, on account of the vast profusion of petticoats already described. At all events, the sound made by the short, quick stamping of this celebrated performer's feet seemed louder than any bangles, or mere circles of gold and silver, might have been expected to produce.

Most of her dancing consisted of gesticulations with the hands and arms, accompanied by what we should call horrible contortions of the body, all of which were considered particularly fine by the admiring natives. The movement most frequently practised was executed with the hands waved, or rather twirled, round the wrists as sockets, as if all the articulations of the joints had been destroyed. A correspondent slow twisting and twining of the arms and legs, with a comical sort of wriggle of the whole body, and a sudden round turn now and then, completed the leading features of this least graceful of exhibitions. The sound of the bells, or whatever they were, attached to her legs, made us fancy at first, that the damsel had concealed a timbrel, or Eastern tambourine, amongst the folds of her huge robe, and that she gave it thumps from time to time with her knee. Occasionally the singer squatted down on the floor, where she remained for several minutes singing or rather screaming, at the full stretch of a shrill voice, and grinning with what she doubtless considered a very languishing and winning smile. As the recovery from this low position was not an easy affair, she generally contented herself with resting, on one knee as a centre, round which the foot of the other leg described a circle, in a circumference of little stamping paces, in good time, to the squalling voices of a couple of pretty young girls, further aided by the accompaniment of two very harsh-sounding stringed instruments.

An hour or two of this monotonous work is rather tiresome to witness; and I suspect that even amongst the natives it serves the purpose merely of a running bass to their bald chat while smoking their pipes, and drinking their well-cooled sherbet. I afterwards attended many of these Hindoo notches; and although there certainly appeared an occasional dancer, with a figure so graceful as to defy art to disguise it, and a simplicity of movement which no corruption of taste could altogether pervert, yet, upon the whole, it is difficult to conceive anything less agreeable to European habits than these exhibitions. I think I may add, as a general remark, that almost all dancing, excepting in countries where the intellect has been much cultivated, is not only ungraceful and tiresome, but generally disgusting, very often highly indecorous, and repugnant alike to good taste and good manners.

The chief interest of Oriental topics, accordingly, whether of living beings, or of inanimate nature, lies almost exclusively out of doors. The domestic economy of the natives differs so totally from ours in all those points which give what we call refinements and comforts, as well as dignity, to the private relations of society, that we are much more apt to be shocked by the indelicacies of their household matters than interested by their novelty. The consequence I believe is, that the English residents in India see scarcely anything of the domestic customs of the Hindoos. Here and there an inquisitive European may be found, whose strange fancy leads him to take delight in the habits of the East, and who, after years of inquiry and patient observation, attains a small degree of knowledge of the interior arrangements of the Hindoo families. But the reports of these gentlemen disinclined me very soon from following their example; and, after any little trials which I made, I always came back to the open air with a strong resolution never again to cross a native's threshold.

It was, therefore, with infinitely greater pleasure, that I mingled with the enormous crowd assembled on the day of full moon to witness the grand annual ceremony of throwing the cocoa-nut. The south-west monsoon blows nearly right on the western coast of India, from June to September inclusive. This is the season of rains, and of gales of wind which would be held very cheap by the hardy mariners of higher latitudes, though they are sufficient to interrupt the coasting trade of the delicate Asiatics. The day of the full moon about the end of the monsoon is always held sacred by the Hindoos of that side of India, on account of its being near the period when the bad weather breaks up, and navigation and commerce revive. The gods of the winds and the sea are then supposed to be in the fittest humour to be propitiated; and it must be allowed that there is no small show of taste, as well as splendour, in the ceremony itself, whatever may be the degree of its influence, as Jack says, with the "clerk of the weather-office."

The whole population of the island (which, I suppose, means about one-tenth part of their

* Jeremiah, xviii. 1—6.

numbers, or between twenty and thirty thousand) were assembled along the shore between Malabar Point and the Fort, in their best and whitest dresses, fluttering in the sea-breeze. The Brahmins, who, of course, took the lead, were collected on the beach in great crowds to officiate as priests; and the chief of the caste, having repaired to the edge of the sea, stood in the water along with his family in a circle, repeating a number of prayers, which were echoed by the other Brahmins. I could not learn what purpose the different parts of the ceremony were intended to answer, but could observe the chief of the Banyans fling fruits and flowers into the air, and occasionally scatter some on the surface of the water. Such of the flowers as the wind drove back to the beach were eagerly caught up by the multitudes in attendance. After this, portions of the different articles held in highest estimation amongst them, as the production of industry or the reward of commercial enterprise, were cast into the waves. These, we were told, consisted of rice, salt, and various spices, particularly cinnamon, from the island of Ceylon, which lies within a few days' sail of Bombay; nutmegs, betel-nut, and cloves, from Penang and the Moluccas. Last of all came the cocoa-nut, which was not thrown into the sea till the deities were supposed to have been soothed and flattered into the most perfect good-humour by the operation of the previous complimentary proceedings.

Along the margin of the bay were collected many thousands of the natives, all anxiously waiting for the final ceremony; and it was curious to observe the eagerness with which they sought to possess a portion of the sacred nuts flung into the water by the Brahmins. At the end of the beach commences the green, or esplanade of the fort; a fine level plain, carpeted with a rich but short-bladed grass, enclosed by railings, and forming an area of half-a-mile square. Upon these grand occasions the esplanade presented a singular mixture of most of the different inhabitants of the earth, each wearing his own peculiar dress, speaking his own native language, following his own customs, and distinguished by many of those attendant circumstances by which he would have been accompanied at his proper home.

All sorts of European coaches, barouches, chariots, and gigs, were driving about, with every other kind of wheeled conveyance, from an artillery waggon to an engineer's wheel-barrow. Elephants bearing castles on their backs paced about the ground, in company with camels, and hundreds of small Arabian horses, just landed from ships arrived from the Red Sea and the gulf of Persia. Palankeens, of course, innumerable, might be seen traversing the field, across the path of native hackaries, and fifty vehicles of which I then knew not the names, and still know them not. By far the greater part of this immense crowd, however, were on foot; and I felt almost bewildered as I passed and repassed amongst them, watched their dresses and gestures, and listened to their various tongues. When I bethought me, moreover, of the singular political circumstances which had combined to bring together such a diversified multitude, from every corner of the globe, to worship strange gods, to live happy and free, and to enjoy their wealth in peace and security under the guns of an English fortress, twelve thousand miles from home, I scarcely knew how to contain the expression of wonder which this novel and brilliant scene was so well calculated to inspire.

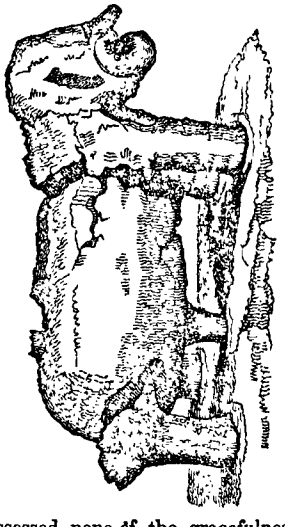
I have only once more to repeat, that he who wishes to see all, or nearly all, which the Eastern world affords, that is characteristic in the dress, language, or manners, of the Asiatic nations, in the shortest time, and at the least expense of money or trouble, has only to make a run to Bombay; and if, on arriving there, he be not gratified far beyond his expectations, he must (to use the common phrase) be very hard to please.

CHAPTER XXIII.

PANORAMAS OF INDIA.

No one is long at Bombay before making a run to Elephanta. I remember it was on a Sunday evening, though I could get no one to accompany me, which I was secretly very glad of, that I slipped away from a party, hired a bunder-boat, and, aided by a fresh wind from the south, skimmed up the harbour, dashed stem on the beach, and landed just below the spot where stood, but, I am sorry to say, no longer stands, the huge stone elephant from whence the island, in our nomenclature, has derived its title. This island, which is called by the natives Gara-poori, or Place of Caves, from two words in the Mahratta language, lies exactly six miles from Bombay Castle, and five from the main shore of India; it is between three and four miles in circumference, and is composed of two long hills, with a narrow and thickly-wooded valley running between them.

The elephant stood about two hundred and fifty yards to the right of the landing-place; on the side of one of the hills above-mentioned, and not far from a ruined Portuguese edifice. Nothing could be more rudely sculptured than this figure,



which possessed none of the gracefulness of the living elephant, though in some of the sculptures in the cave temples of India that character is

exceedingly well preserved. I was in much too great a hurry at my first visit to think of measuring or drawing this singular specimen of ancient Hindoo art; but about a year afterwards, in company with Mr. William Erskine of Bombay, a complete set of measurements of all his dimensions were made, and I also took a sketch of the figure, then almost tottering to its fall. The wood-cut on the preceding page is from a drawing made on the spot, and, though slight, it conveys a pretty correct idea of the form and proportions of this celebrated figure. Some of the dimensions which we took are also given.

	Ft.	In.
Length from the forehead to the tail	13	2
Height of the head	7	4
Circumference at the height of the shoulders	35	5
Circumference round the four legs . . .	32	0
Breadth of the back	8	0
Girth of the body	20	0
Length of the legs, from 5 ft. to . . .	6	0
Circumference of ditto, from 6 feet 3 inches to	7	7
Length of the supporter	2	2
Length of the tail (not seen in the sketch) . .	7	9
Length of the trunk	7	10
Remains of the right tusk	0	11

In September, 1814, before I left India, the head and neck dropped off, and the body shortly afterwards sunk down to the earth; so that, I fear, all traces of our old and much-respected friend will by this time have disappeared. For the sake of those who take an interest in these things, I am glad we bestirred ourselves in time, and that quite as minute an account as can be desired of the Elephant, in all his bearings, is faithfully recorded in the first volume of the Transactions of the Bombay Literary Society.

Captain Pyke, who wrote in 1712, exactly a hundred years before our visit, mentions, that the elephant carried a smaller one upon him; and Anquetil describes the young elephant as still existing in 1760. Niebuhr observes, in 1764, that the elephant had on its back something which age had worn so much, that it had become impossible to distinguish what it was. I perceive it asserted in a note of mine to Mr. Erskine's account, that in 1813 the small figure on the top could not have been an elephant, but may have been a tiger! Thus it is, that the fewer and more indistinct the data we possess, the more confidently we often pronounce upon a dubious fact.

After paying my respects to this celebrated figure, I set off, as fast as I could run, to save the little daylight that was left; for the sun had gone down before we reached the island, and I was anxious to catch a glimpse of the caves. The panting guide toiled after me in vain, and I had well nigh lost myself in the jungle, from the extremity of my impatience to secure at least one glance at the stupendous wonder which I knew to be close at hand. As I scampered along, a curious species of delusion came over me, which I have experienced on several other occasions not altogether dissimilar. I allude to those agitating moments when one is on the very edge of a discovery, and just about to witness in reality something upon which the mind's eye has so long rested, that its imaginative character has almost gained the ascendency in our belief over its actual existence. Under such fantastic circumstances I have often become half afraid that some accident was still to occur to interfere with the accomplishment of a purpose so long and ardently sought after; and have felt as if some magical process were in action to carry the whole scene out of reach.

I remember, in particular, three other occasions, when a very strong presentiment of this distracting nature haunted my mind, and rendered the period which preceded the events anything but agreeable.

When summoned to Bonaparte's ante-chamber, and told that "in two or three minutes the Emperor Napoleon would give me an audience," this tormenting feeling came fully into play. While waiting in this apartment, and listening to the creak of the mighty monarch's shoes, I held my breath till I was well nigh suffocated, and trembled with a sort of dread that some untoward event would yet spring up, to stand between me and a sight of him who had been so long the foremost man of all the world.

I was less fortunate the next time, when under the influence of a similar dread of being thwarted in my wish. I had always a vehement desire to see and converse with Lord Byron; and on being seized with an ague at Venice, in 1818, I solicited and received the benefit of his friendly offices. But even then, when in communication with him by notes and messages, I had a strong feeling that I was never to be gratified by a sight of the noble poet himself. I once actually heard his voice in the neighbouring apartment, but was too unwell to admit him to the room, or even to raise my head. Still, I made certain that, after all, I was to be disappointed—and so it proved.

The third occasion was that of Niagara; and I remember quite well having a still stranger fancy perplexing me then. I had an idea, very vague of course, and only floating about in my brain in the most evanescent style possible, that although ten minutes would suffice to bring the cataract in sight, I might perhaps not live long enough to see it. In my anxiety to secure the first possible glimpse, I gave my neck a twist, by stretching it and bending it out of the window of the carriage, as we drove along the top of the perpendicular bank, overhanging the river below the falls.

The caves of Elephanta, indeed, have hardly pretensions to stand in the same group of wonders with those above alluded to. But when I first visited India I was about fifteen years younger, and my blood was completely on the boil with curiosity in all that related to the Eastern world. Neither did I find this high fever of orientalism ever subside while on the spot, or indeed since. On the contrary, the taste for Asiatic wonders gained fresh accessions with every new gratification, till at times I almost fancied I must have been struck by that wild calenture of the brain caused by the vertical rays of the tropical sun, which seems to turn the open sea into such beautiful green fields and fruited gardens, that the enchanted seaman is with difficulty prevented from leaping overboard.

However this may be, I am persuaded the unhappy guide who accompanied me into the great cave at Elephanta thought me utterly bewitched. At all events, he speedily made a side move towards the opening, so as to secure his retreat, and there stood, with his arms folded on his breast, the Eastern attitude of respect, gazing with a mixture

of fear and astonishment at the antics I cut, and the vehement shouts I sent forth, on first getting sight of the gigantic triple head which forms the principal feature in this prodigious temple.

As the night was falling rapidly, I could make no sketches, nor take any measurements of consequence. I therefore merely satisfied myself that the distance from the top of the nose to the bottom of the chin of the centre head was three feet and two inches, and that the length of the nose was one foot seven inches and a half. I also spanned several of the columns; and easily ascertained the height of the roof, by means of a pole, to be about sixteen feet. I then scampered round the different compartments or chapels, into which the cave is divided, till it was almost pitch dark, and at last tugged myself away from a scene which, nearly as much as any I think I have ever beheld, filled up the expectations previously formed of it. It is quite true, that nothing I now saw bore the smallest resemblance to what I had been led to expect from the numerous accounts I had read; but as the whole was much more interesting than had been looked for, there could be no reasonable complaint on that score. I had seen quite enough to show that there were many good days' work before me, and came away fully resolved to return next morning, to devote myself exclusively to the cave, to cut all society, and even to give up the various objects of high and exciting interest connected with the famine at Bombay; in short, to forget everything but the caves of Elephanta.

How little can we reckon upon such resolutions! It was hardly possible that any man could be more in earnest than I then was, and yet it was upwards of a year afterwards ere I again entered the cave with which I had been so much enchanted as to swear I would not forsake it! The real truth is, and this I have learned by much actual experience in every quarter of the world, that the social living interests of good company, and the mutual communications of friendship between man and man are, to my mind at least, vastly more attractive than the most curious objects of the inanimate world. I would almost back a pleasant dinner-party, or a promising ball, against the greatest natural wonder, or even artificial curiosity, that art or nature ever turned out of hand!

It must be owned, that, of all the lions of India, there are few to compare with the cave temples of Elephanta, which, from lying within less than one hour's sail of the town of Bombay, form the scene of many a pleasure party; a circumstance which ought to add considerably to the recommendation I have already given, that any person wishing to behold at a glance all the wonders of the East should select Bombay, rather than any other place. The island of Elephanta lies only a few miles further up the harbour than the spot where the ships anchor off the fort; and as large and commodious boats, covered with awnings, are to be had at a minute's warning, nothing is so easy as to transport one's self from the midst of the European society of the presidency, or from the bustle of the crowded native bazaar, into the most complete solitude. As the island is not inhabited, the traveller finds himself at once undisturbed amidst some of the oldest and most curious, or, at all events, most striking, remains of the ancient grandeur of the Hindoos, which are anywhere to be met with. The effect, I have no doubt, is considerably augmented by the unusual abruptness of the change from a scene of such particular bustle to another of entire stillness. There are many points of intrinsic local interest about Elephanta which rank it very high in the scale of curiosity; yet it is one of those wonders which, although it may far exceed in interest what we expect, necessarily baffles anticipation. No drawing can represent it. Even a panorama, which, in the case of Niagara, has already conveyed to European senses most of the wonders of the great American cataract, could make nothing of Elephanta. The only device that could give a just conception of the form, size, colour, and so on, of these caves, would be a model of the full dimensions, similar to what Belzoni exhibited of an Egyptian mummy pit. But even such a gigantic work as the model supposed, though it might entertain some folks, would prove but a poor speculation, I suspect, in London. Not two persons in every ten thousand of those who daily pass Charing Cross ever heard of this wonderful cave; and if seduced into the show by the familiar influence of the name Elephanta, they would probably expect to see their old friend of Exeter 'Change swallowing a bushel of rice at a mouthful, or picking up a needle with his trunk.

Even were such a model, or exact copy of Elephanta to be examined by a person who really cared about such things, and had heard so much of the caves as to be interested in their details, the model would of necessity fail to produce on his mind the full effect of seeing the original on the spot. The associations of place, and other circumstances, such as climate, scenery, and historical recollections, perhaps constitute the greater portion of such interest. What could the rattle of carriages outside the brick walls containing a panorama of Elephanta furnish to the imagination compared to the rustling of the monsoon through the branches of the mangoe, the banana, and the tamarind, or high aloft among the cocoa-nuts, and the flickering fan-shaped leaves of the brab-tree? What ideas of time and place would be suggested by the presence of six or eight families of sober citizens, with their attendant swarms of little holiday cockneys, from the schools of Putney and Pentonville, compared to the bright fancies conjured up by the glow of an Indian landscape, and the presence of numerous groups of Hindoos scattered on the grass, under the shade of some broad-leaved plantain, or, more appropriate still,

> "Reposing from the noon-tide sultriness,
> Couched among fallen columns"

of the great temple once held so sacred by every worshipper of Shiva and Shatki, though now desecrated, and half-destroyed by the rude hands of their heretical conquerors?

But although it be utterly hopeless to gain a just idea of Elephanta by other means than an actual visit, I must not be understood as saying anything to depreciate panoramas of objects which fall within the range of that stupendous branch of the art. These paintings are, in fact, the greatest possible allies to a traveller in his descriptions:

witness the beautiful representation of Madras, which was exhibited in London in 1832, and painted by Mr. William Daniell, an artist, who, from long residence in the East, had acquired the habit of feeling his subject so thoroughly that the power of expressing it seemed a sort of instinct. I certainly never beheld any thing comparable to the taste and fidelity with which all that is characteristic of Indian climate and scenery in general, and of the Madras variety of it in particular, not forgetting the magnificent surf, has been preserved in this exquisite panorama. It is nearly hopeless, indeed, to expect that another such painter of oriental scenery as Daniell shall start up in our day; and even if he did, it might not suit his views to paint panoramas.

Every one who has visited the Colosseum has probably heard the anecdote of the worthy citizen of London, who repaired to the panorama the moment it was opened, and at one glance pronounced the whole a failure, loudly declaring he would dissuade all his friends from visiting so incomplete a production. The painter himself, (from whom I have the story,) happening to be present, begged to know the grounds of so prompt and sweeping a criticism on a work which had occupied several years of patient labour.

"Why, look ye there, sir! That is my house, and the knocker is placed over the plate, instead of under."

The panorama-painters of such scenes as are close at hand, are accordingly obliged to make themselves minutely acquainted, in person, with the spots represented, otherwise their pretensions go for *nothing*; their work is soon discovered to be done by one who has not seen the original, and the shillings cease to pour in. But when the painter comes to handle a remote country, such as Rio de Janeiro, or Bombay, for example, what possible means have the great mass of visiters of estimating the *fidelity* of the representation? They can have none. The consequence is, that, in many instances, nearly as much error is taught as genuine knowledge. I venture, indeed, to say, that the preponderance is always on the side of error, whenever it so happens that the artist who actually finishes the work has not himself visited the scene represented. It is almost, or, I believe I might say, quite, impossible, for any man to paint a truly correct picture from the sketches of another. The best drawings, aided by all the camera obscuras and camera lucidas in the world, though coloured on the spot by the best draughtsman that ever left home, must still, of absolute necessity, fail to include myriads of objects, which, though utterly unsuitable for representation in detail on canvas, do, nevertheless, in point of fact, cover the retina of the painter's eye with images of colour, form, light and shade, and all those et ceteras which combine on the spot to impress not only his sense of sight, but his understanding and feelings, with a just conception of the place he is looking at. When a pictorial representation of all this is to be made, the chief study of an artist who, from personal examination, has become completely master of the subject, is not so much what to keep in, as what to keep out. In order to make even a tolerably good picture, his store of local ideas, to be productive, must be accumulated in vast excess; and to be pleasing or essentially instructive, the result ought to consist of such selections only from this superabundance of materials, as shall best convey to spectators at a distance a just conception of the whole.

It is a task sufficiently hard, even for a man of taste, talents, and industry, as well as much experience and practice, to make, though on the spot, a perfectly satisfactory drawing of a new scene; that is to say, such a picture as shall not only satisfy a traveller who has visited the spot, but shall produce as far as possible an impression similar to what a view of the reality would leave on the mind of a person who should be allowed to take merely a glance at the original. To hope that any such result can attend the labours of those panorama-painters who work entirely from the sketches, or even from the most elaborate drawings, of others, without having themselves ever visited the scenes represented, is to look for an impossibility. I have had opportunities of comparing a great many panoramas with the scenes pretended to be represented in foreign parts, and have invariably found that when the actual painter himself had not been on the spot to make the drawings, the work has proved unsatisfactory. That of Rio de Janeiro, for instance, taught, as I conceive, more error than truth. Although the outlines may have been correct, the distances were so outrageously perverted, that merely to look at it made any one's head ache who had been there. The impression, indeed, produced on the feelings by the panorama alluded to was like that left by a disturbed feverish dream. We could see quite well that the capital of Brazil was intended; but no two parts of the harbour, the town, or the hills, stood in their relative places as to distance, consequently everything looked out of joint and disproportioned. The colouring, too, and the shading, were equally distorted, so that the whole picture was rendered inexpressibly painful to an eye familiar with the reality.

As a matter of mere curiosity, we should go to every panorama of places which we have seen; but if the work have been executed by one who has not visited the spot, we seldom feel much desire to go a second time; whereas, if it bears the stamp of local knowledge, we find that each visit only enhances the interest. This, however, will rarely take place except when the painter is a man of talents and genius; for the mere fact of his having visited the object will not inspire dulness with taste, nor give to mediocrity the power of bringing home such scenes as Niagara or Teneriffe. And this, by the way, reminds me of a resolution I have made, never to cease urging the panorama proprietors to give us on canvas one or both of these magnificent scenes, which are, perhaps, the subjects best adapted for their purposes of any they can now find untouched. But the task must positively be performed by a person who shall go to the spot for that express purpose; I do not mean to make sketches for others to paint from, but to make the actual drawings which he himself is afterwards to convert into a panorama. He must also be a man who understands his business well, and who is determined to do justice to such noble themes; and, my life for it, he will make his fortune by the exhibition.

The time required for an expedition to Niagara need not much exceed three months in all, and

the expenses of travelling, everything included, may be considerably under a hundred pounds. The voyage out will occupy, say five weeks, the cost 35 guineas; home again three weeks, at 30 guineas, which makes two months of sea voyage, and the expense under 70*l*. The land journey to the Falls, say four or five days, and back again as many, leaves nearly three weeks of the three months for actual work. The cost of the double journey, and the living in the mean time, would certainly be much under 30*l*. The wear and tear of sea-sickness is, indeed, a formidable drawback; and the dead loss of eight weeks at sea forms another serious consideration; but the result, I think, would afford one of the most popular exhibitions the public have yet seen. Of this I am very strongly persuaded, because I see no sort of difficulty in bringing away almost everything that is characteristic of Niagara, and holding it up to view at a distance from the scene itself, without any material loss of the interest which belongs essentially to an actual sight of the Falls.

In the first place, the forms assumed by the different parts of this mighty cataract are absolutely invariable. I have watched particular spots for half a day without detecting the change of a hair's-breadth; and it is well known as one of the most striking peculiarities of Niagara, that the variations of the seasons, which, more or less, affect every other waterfall, cause no visible change in this monarch of cascades. One singular result of this invariable aspect is an appearance almost of stillness; that is to say, there is none of that tumbling and tossing about which one is apt to imagine there must be. All its movements are solemn, uniform, sublime; and withal so perfectly unchanging, that they come quite within the reach, I should conceive, of a painter's skill to represent with that fidelity which, taken along with the proper degree of help from the imagination, would leave hardly anything wanting on the score of motion. According to the time of the day, the altitude of the sun, and the state of the weather, the lights and shades along the Fall certainly do vary considerably. But a painter of any genius and true knowledge of his art would soon discover which of these varieties was most effective, and seize for representation that phase best calculated to aid him in his great enterprise. Be it remembered, too, that (unlike almost any other place of note) there are no local associations worth a straw about Niagara, and that it is the cataract itself, and nothing else, which we care for. The scenery in the neighbourhood is below contempt, the ground being uniformly flat, the trees stunted, and the whole prospect uninteresting; nor is there anything in the history of those regions either to add to, or take from, the interest of the mere Fall. This is what we can say of hardly any other scene fit for the honour of being represented in a panorama.

There are positions from which the Fall might be made to occupy between one-half and two-thirds of the circumference: the rapids and the bendings of the river below, with a portion of the cliffs, might fill up the remainder of the circle with great effect.

When we look at the panorama of Naples, we sigh on missing the climate, and the fruits, and the myriads of antique interests, which we know belong to the spot, but cannot be brought away. Or if we turn to the delightful representation of Gibraltar, we feel an eager desire to climb the rock, that we may look over the steep face which is turned to the Levant; or view, on one hand, the country of Don Quixote; on the other, the birth-place of the Moors, and the scene of Mungo Park's travels, the delight of our youthful reading. But Niagara has no history and no associations which must be left behind.

As to the noise, that really need go for nothing. I have often sat very near the cataract, without being sensible of any unusual sound, for its loudness depends very much on the wind; and forms, generally speaking, no material portion of the grandeur of the scene. At certain places, I admit, the noise is grand enough, but it clearly forms no essential part; and the simpler beauties and wonders of this glorious spectacle would, of course, furnish the chief source of interest—I may say of permanent interest. For if this panorama were well executed, it could not fail to impart some portion of the pleasure communicated by the reality, which differs from almost every other my various wanderings have made me acquainted with. Instead of fading on the memory, or being disturbed by fresh sights, Niagara only becomes brighter and brighter with a more extended experience of the rest of the world *.

The caves of Elephanta are not, by any means, of the same stamp; but they possess their own share of deep interest, which will not let them slip off the recollection. I was not more anxious to get sight of Niagara than to have a look at Elephanta; nor can I pretend to say which of the two gratified me most at first. Comparisons, after all, between such incongruous things are not only useless, but absurd. It is like comparing the pleasure of viewing the Elgin marbles with the surprise caused by hearing a concerto played on one string. The former is pure, sublime, and enduring; the latter is strange, inexplicable, and transient. One we recollect merely for its singularity, the other for its instruction in genuine taste and refined fancy. Elephanta, therefore, considered as a work of art, may be compared to one of Paganini's extravaganzas in music. Niagara, on the other hand, in grandeur and severe simplicity, is about as difficult to match amongst the natural wonders of the earth, as the Parthenon of Athens amongst the works of man. Rivals, no doubt, may be found; but I suspect they will both remain for ever at the top of their respective classes.

* P.S.—In consequence, I believe, of these remarks, Mr. Burford, the accomplished artist to whom the world is indebted for so many magnificent representations of nature, actually went to Niagara and made drawings for a panorama, which was afterwards exhibited in London. Unfortunately Mr. Burford was deterred from painting this stupendous scene on the larger of his two great canvases—so that Niagara had not fair play. There had already been exhibited, by some other hand, the most wretched daub ever seen, and called by the name of the Falls of Niagara. The deteriorating effect of this caricature of nature was so great, that Mr. Burford was afraid to expend the capital required for the larger panorama. Even, however, on the small canvas, the effect of the mighty cataract was considerable.

CHAPTER XXIV.

SIR SAMUEL HOOD AND THE ALLIGATOR HUNT.

As soon as the Volage was refitted, and her crew refreshed, after our voyage from England of four months and a half, we sailed from Bombay to the southward along the western coast of India; and having rounded Ceylon, at the extreme south-western corner of which, Point de Galle, where we merely touched to land the governor's dispatches, we hauled up to the northward, and, after twelve days' passage, sailed into the beautiful harbour of Trincomalee. There, to my great joy, we found the commander-in-chief, Sir Samuel Hood; who, to my still greater joy, communicated that a vacancy had been kept open for me in his flag-ship, the Illustrious. In a few minutes my traps were packed up, my commission made out, and I had the honour and the happiness of hailing myself a professional follower of one of the first officers in His Majesty's service. It is true, I was only fifth lieutenant of the ship, and not even fifth on the Admiral's list for promotion; for I came after a number of old officers who had served under Sir Samuel for many long years of patient, or rather impatient, expectation. But my first and grand purpose was attained, viz., that of getting fairly into the line of promotion; and for a time I did not fret much, or consider myself the most ill-used man in the service, merely because my chance of advancement was very small, and remote.

In capstans, and other machines, there is a mechanical device, with which every person is acquainted, termed a pall or catch, by which the work gained in the effort last made shall be secured, and the machine prevented from turning back again. Something of this kind takes place in life, particularly in naval life; and happy is the officer who hears the pall of his fortunes play 'click! click!' as he rapidly spins up to the highest stations in his profession. Proportionately deep is the despair of the poor wretch who, after struggling and tugging with all his might at the weary windlass of his hopes, can never bring it quite far enough round to hear the joyous sound of the pall dropping into its berth! I well remember most of these important moments of my own life; and I could readily describe the different sensations to which their successive occurrence gave rise, from the startling hour (thirty-eight years ago) when my father first told me that my own request was now to be granted, for on the very next day I was to go to sea—up to that instant when the still more important and awful announcement met my ear, "Those whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder!"

Nothing perhaps more distinctly characterises men, than the different manner in which they behave on these occasions. One person, acquiring fresh spirits from the consciousness of so much of his fortunes being secured, plants his foot more firmly on the deck, and grasping the handspike anew, springs aloft to command, by a still more vigorous effort of his strength, the next revolution of the windlass; while another man, similarly circumstanced, remains content with the first step gained. It is wrong, however, to say that he remains content, for there is no contentment in the sluggishness with which he waits till some one helps him to accomplish that purpose which he has not energy enough to attempt single-handed. In two words: the classes of people we are speaking of may be divided into those who know how to avail themselves of the opportunities within their reach, and those who will not, or, at all events, who do not, screw up their courage to the sticking-place alluded to. There is a charming sea-song by Dibdin (that prince of nautical minstrels!) one part of which often came to my aid in seasons of professional despondency:

> "So I seized the capstan-bar
> Like a true-hearted tar,
> And in spite of sighs and tears sung out, Yo heave ho."

"It is easy to be cheerful when one is successful," says a high authority; and there are "few people who are not good-natured when they have nothing to cross them," says another equally profound recorder of common-places; but the secret of good fortune seems to lie far less in making the most of favourable incidents, or in submitting manfully to disastrous ones, than in studying how to fill up to advantage the long intervals between these great epochs in our lives. So that there is, perhaps, no point of duty which affords more scope for the talents of a superior than the useful and cheerful employment of the heads and hands of his officers and people during those trying periods of inaction which occur in every service. Sir Samuel Hood possessed this faculty in a wonderful degree, as he not only kept us all busy when there was nothing to be done, but contrived to make us happy and contented, though some of our prospects were poor enough in all conscience. My own, for example, since I was placed at the tip of the tail of his long string of private followers; and when the Admiralty List came out, on which I had built so many beautiful castles in the air, my poor name was not upon it at all. I had not expected to be first or second, or even third; fourth I had reckoned upon as possible; fifth as probable; sixth as certain; so that my horror and disappointment were excessive when this kindest of commanders-in-chief broke to me the fatal news, in the following characteristic manner.

A telegraphic signal had been made from the flag-staff at the Admiral's house to the ship, in these words:

"Send Mr. Hall on shore, with a crow-bar, two pick-axes, and two spades."

All the way to the landing-place I puzzled myself with thinking what on earth could be the object of these tools; little dreaming, good easy lieutenant! that I was so soon to dig the grave of my own hopes. The Admiral received me at the door with his coat off; and holding out his remaining hand (his right arm was shot away in action), he squeezed mine with even more than his wonted kindness.

"I have been waiting for you with some impatience;" he said, "to be present at the hunt after a white ant's nest, a sort of thing I know you like. These rogues, the *Termites bellicosi*, as I find the naturalists call them, have made their way into the house! and having carried their galleries up the walls and along the roof, have come down in

great force upon a trunk of clothes, which they would have destroyed entirely before night, had I not caught sight of them. Now let us to work; for I propose to rip up the floor of the verandah, in order to follow their passages and galleries till I reach their nest, if it be a mile off; won't this be a glorious piece of service?" exclaimed the Admiral, as he warmed himself by anticipating the chase. He could hardly have been more delighted, I am persuaded, had he been giving orders for a fleet under his command to bear down upon the enemy's line. Of course, I failed not to feel or feign the enthusiasm of my commander-in-chief—a little of both, perhaps; for the utmost possible, or even conceivable, familiarity of an Admiral, will scarcely ever crack the ice of a lieutenant's reserve in his commander-in-chief's presence. We may cherish and obey him, as much, or more, than any wife ever did, or promised to do, her spouse; but I never yet saw a naval man, in uniform or in plain clothes, on shore or afloat, sober or merry, that could, even in appearance, bring himself to take a liberty with one who, in times past—no matter how long—had once been his commanding-officer. This truth is doubly, trebly true, at moments of actual service; and though Sir Samuel was all smiles and favour, standing without his coat in the verandah with a crow-bar in his grasp, his bare breast and single arm exposed naked to the sea-breeze, then just beginning to puff at intervals over the low, red-hot isthmus or neck of land between the inner harbour and the eastern beach, I could not venture to do more than bow, and say I was much obliged to him for having so considerately thought of me at such a moment.

"Oh!" cried he, apparently recollecting himself, "but I have something else to show you; or rather to tell you, for I must not show it to you; though I fear it will not please you quite so much as the prospect of a white ant hunt. Here, Gigna," called the Admiral to his steward, who stood by with a tea-kettle of hot water, ready to pour over the ants, "put away that affair, which we shall not require this half-hour yet; and hold this crow-bar while I step into the office with Mr. Hall."

"It is of no use to mince the matter," said the veteran, shutting the door, and turning to me with somewhat of the air which he might be supposed to have put on, had he been instructed from home to tell me that one or both my parents were dead; "it is no use to conceal the fact from you; but here is the Admiralty List, just come to my hands, and your name, in spite of all you tell me of promises, verbal and written, is NOT ON IT!"

Had the Admiral fired one of the flag-ship's thirty-two pounders, double-shotted, down my throat, he could not have demolished more completely my bodily frame-work than this fatal announcement shattered to pieces the gilded crockery-ware of my fondest hopes. All the gay visions of command, and power, and independence in which I had indulged my fancy during the voyage, vanished like the shadows of a dream I fain would recall, but could not. I was at first quite stupified, and can remember nothing that passed for some minutes. As I recovered my scattered senses, however, I recollect gazing at the anchorage from the open window of the Admiralty House, near which we stood. The flag-ship then lay just off Osnaburg Point, with her ensign, or, as it used to be called in old books, her Ancient, the "meteor flag of England," dropped, in the calm, so perpendicularly from the gaff-end, that it looked like a rope more than a flag; while its reflection, as well as that of the ship herself, with every mast, yard, and line of the rigging, seemed, as it were, engraved on the surface of the tranquil pool, as distinctly as if another vessel had actually been inverted and placed beneath. I have seldom witnessed so complete a calm. The sea-breeze, with which the shore had been refreshed for twenty minutes, had not as yet found its way into the recesses of the inner harbour, which, take it all in all, is one of the snuggest and most beautiful coves in the world. And such is the commodious nature of this admirable port, that even the Illustrious, though a large 74-gun ship, rode at anchor in perfect security, within a very few yards of the beach, which at that spot is quite steep to, and is wooded down to, the very edge of the water. I gazed for some minutes, almost unconsciously, at this quiet scene, so different from that which was boiling and bubbling in my own distracted breast, and swelling up with indignation against some of my truest friends at home, who I had such good reason to believe had either betrayed or neglected me, maugre all sorts of promises.

In the midst of my reverie, which the kind-hearted Admiral did not interrupt, I observed the wind just touch the drooping flag; but the air was so light and transient, that it merely produced on it a gentle motion from side to side, like that of a pendulum, imitated in the mirror beneath, which lay as yet totally unbroken by the sea-breeze. Presently the whole mighty flag, after a faint struggle or two, gradually unfolded itself, and, buoyed up by the new-born galé, spread far beyond the gallant line-of-battle ship's stern, and waved gracefully over the harbour. It is well known to nice observers of the human mind, that the strangest fancies often come into the thoughts at a moment when we might least expect them; and though, assuredly, I was not then in a very poetical or imaginative humour, I contrived to shape out of the inspiring scene I was looking upon a figure to soothe my disappointed spirit. As I saw the ensign uncurl itself to the wind I said internally, "If I have but life, and health, and opportunity, I trust, notwithstanding the bitterness of this disappointment, I shall yet contrive to unfold, in like manner, the flag of my own fortunes to the world."

Just as this magnanimous thought crossed my mind's eye, the Admiral placed his hand so gently on my shoulder that the pressure would not have hurt a fly, and said, in a cheerful tone, "Never mind this mishap, master Hall; everything will come right in time; and if you only resolve to take it in the proper and manly temper, it may even prove all the better that this has happened. Nothing is without a remedy in this world; and I'll do what I can to make good this maxim in your case. In the mean time, however, come along, and help me to rout out these rascally white ants. Off coat, however, if you please; for we shall have a tough job of it."

It cost us an hour's hard work; for we had to

rip up the planks along the whole of the verandah, then to shape a course across two cellars, or godongs, as they are called in the East, and finally the traverses of these singular animals obliged us to cut a trench to the huge hillock or nest, which rose to the height of five or six feet from the ground, in numberless shoots, like pinnacles round the roof of a Gothic church. We might have attacked them at head-quarters in the first instance, had we wished it; but the Admiral chose to go more technically to work, and to sap up to his enemy by regular approaches. In this way we had the means of seeing the principles upon which these ants proceed in securing themselves at every step of their progress by galleries or covered ways, which, though extremely feeble, are sufficiently strong to keep off the attacks of every other kind of ant. It is curious enough, that although the white ant be the most destructive of its species, it is said to be, individually, by far the weakest, and cannot move a step without the artificial protection of the galleries it constructs as it goes along; just as the besiegers of a fortification secure themselves in their trenches and zigzags.

We now brought our spades into play; and having cut the hill across, laid open the secrets of these most curious of all the ant tribe. At last we reached the great queen ant, the mother of millions of her race, a most enormous personage to be sure, nearly four inches long, and as thick as a man's finger, with a head not larger than that of a bee, but a body such as I have described, filled with eggs, which continually rolled out like a fluid from a reservoir. Never shall I forget the shout of rapture which the gallant Admiral sent over half the harbour, as he succeeded in gaining the object of his labours.

There are some men who go about everything they undertake with all their hearts and souls, and this great officer was one of those. He did nothing by halves and quarters, like so many other people. The greatest deeds of arms, or the most trivial objects of passing amusement, engrossed his whole concentrated attention for the time. He was equally in earnest when holding out examples of private generosity, or lending the heartiest and kindest encouragement even to the least distinguished of his followers, as when performing acts of the highest public spirit, or making the greatest sacrifices to what he considered his duty. Everything, in short, that he did, or thought, or uttered, bore the stamp of the same peculiar impress of genuine zeal. So eminently exciting, and even fascinating, was this truly officer-like conduct, that even those who had served under him the longest often wondered at the extent of their own exertions when roused by his example, and were led almost to believe that his very look had something stimulating in it which actually gave fresh vigour to their arms as well as to their thoughts. With all this, he was the gentlest of the gentle, and accomplished whatever he undertook without apparent effort, or the least consciousness that what he was doing was remarkable.

I remember an instance of his skill in the small way. One morning, near the spot where he had headed the storming-party against the white ants, a working-party of the crew of the Illustrious had commenced constructing a wharf before the dock-yard. The stones of which this platform or landing-place was to be built were, by Sir Samuel Hood's orders, selected of very large dimensions, so much so, that the sailors came at last to deal with a mass of rock so heavy, that their combined strength proved unequal to moving it beyond a few inches towards its final position at the top of one corner. The Admiral sat on his horse looking at the workmen for some time, occasionally laughing, and occasionally calling out directions, which the baffled engineers could by no means apply. At length, his Excellency the Commander-in-chief became fidgety, and having dismounted, he tried to direct them in detail; but never a bit would the stone budge. Finally, losing all patience, he leaped from the top of the bank, and roared out, in a voice of reproach and provocation, "Give me the crow-bar!" Thus armed, he pushed the officers and men to the right and left, while he insisted upon having the whole job to himself, literally, single-handed. He first drove the claws of the instrument well under the edge of the stone, then placed with his toe a small iron pin on the ground under the bar, and across its length, to act as a fulcrum, or shoulder. When all things were carefully adjusted to his mind, he slipped his hand to the upper end of the lever, and weighing it down, gave what he called 'life' to the huge stone, which, just before, half-a-dozen strong men had not been able to disturb. Sure enough, however, it now moved, though only about half an inch, towards its intended resting-place. At each prize or hitch of the bar, the rock appeared to advance farther, till, after five or six similar shifts, it was finally lodged in the station prepared for it, where, I doubt not, it rests to this day, and may occupy for centuries to come.

I need scarcely say that the Admiral himself was delighted with his triumph, or that his provocation against the men subsided at each successful march of the stone, until, at length, when the operation was completed, he flung down the bar, and called out to the grinning party, but with infinite good-humour, "There! you hay-making, tinkering, tailoring fellows, that's the way to move a stone—when you know how!"

In fact, no officer I have ever served with, better 'knew how,' not only himself to do everything 'that might become a man,' but how to stimulate others to do so likewise; or, if need should be, as in this instance of the corner-stone, to instruct them practically. What is interesting, however, and still more important in every way, he never lost sight of his own true dignity, or weakened his personal or his official authority, by any such condescensions. On the contrary, both appeared only to be enhanced by familiarities which such a mind alone could safely trust itself with, and which, from their being totally devoid of affectation, were always suitable to his character, and appropriate to the circumstances as well as persons in whose favour they were granted. In this unreserved freedom of manner, an officer less gifted by nature, or not so thoroughly master of his business in all its branches, could hardly have indulged; but in Sir Samuel Hood's hands it

* See an exceedingly interesting account of the *Termes bellicosus*, or white ant, in Shaw's Zoology, vol. vi., taken chiefly from the Philosophical Transactions for the year 1781.

became an instrument of great importance, and invariably turned the heartiest exertions of every officer and man under him to his purpose, which, I need scarcely add, was synonymous with the public good.

The loss of such a man to the country at large, and to the naval service in particular, was in many respects irreparable; for although his example must ever dwell deeply engraven on the minds of those who knew him personally, he carried away with him to his early grave very much which no instruction could impart, no memory supply, nor indeed any eulogium do justice to. I allude chiefly to that rare combination of talents and professional experience welded together by the highest public spirit, animated to useful action by the most ardent zeal which perhaps ever possessed an officer. I have sometimes thought, that a professional sketch of this great commander's career, including, as it might readily and naturally be made to do, many of the most important incidents of the lives of his great contemporaries, Nelson, St. Vincent, and Collingwood, would prove a useful practical manual for the rising generation afloat.

In the meantime, for want of a better, I feel tempted to give a place here to a few words which I wrote in the Bombay Courier, in January 1815, (the first time I ever tried my hand in print,) on the day our excellent commander-in-chief's death was made known at that presidency.

"It is with the deepest regret we announce the death of Vice-admiral Sir Samuel Hood. This officer had raised himself so high in the public estimation by the number and importance of his services, had shown himself so admirable in the conduct of every enterprise in which he had been engaged, was still so young in years and unbroken in spirit, so thoroughly possessed of the enthusiastic admiration and entire confidence of every man in his profession, that his loss cannot be considered otherwise than as a severe and irreparable misfortune to his country at large; while to those who have enjoyed a nearer view of his excellence, who have served under his command, or have lived in his society, his death is unspeakably afflicting.

"Sir Samuel Hood possessed in a peculiar degree the qualifications which form a great commander: to the calmest and most accurate judgment, he added a presence of mind and rapidity of perception, under all changes of situation, that enabled him to turn every event, which arose even out of unforeseen difficulties and dangers, to the purpose he had in view. In common with Nelson, he was anxious and impatient while there remained a doubt that the foe could be grappled with: but when the battle once began, his matchless intrepidity, his coolness, and the precision with which all his orders were given, diffused a confidence that was almost uniformly attended by victory.

"But it was not only on these great and trying occasions that he proved himself one of the best officers in the service; for he was eminently skilled in most branches of his profession, whether scientific or practical. He was intimately versed in astronomy, as far, at least, as it is connected with navigation. In geography, ship-building, and fortification, and in many branches of mechanical philosophy, he was also well skilled. He studied, without exception, the languages, and, as far as possible, the laws and customs, of every country he visited. His strong natural taste for scientific inquiry, and an unbounded curiosity to see things with his own eyes, were kept in perpetual action by the belief that these acquisitions of knowledge might one day prove useful to his country. That they did prove so, those who are acquainted with his life can amply testify. His surveys of the coasts in North America recommended him to early notice as an excellent hydrographer. The bold and original idea of fortifying the Diamond Rock at Martinique, and the immediate execution of that difficult undertaking, showed him to be a skilful engineer. The extraordinary defence of Salerno, with a few marines opposed to an army—his capture of Tobago, St. Lucia, and Demerara—and his decision after the failure at Teneriffe—all exhibit him as an able general. His gallant capture of a Russian ship of the line, in presence of the Russian fleet; followed by his politic and conciliatory self-denial in sending the flag which he had just taken to the King of Sweden, as if it had been a trophy of that monarch's arms; and, some years before, his communications with the governors and pashas in Syria; together with innumerable other instances, place him high as a statesman and a negotiator.

"The unaffected modesty and simplicity of one who had filled so great a space in public admiration, was not the least remarkable part of his character: he had the rare felicity, even to his latest years, to preserve undiminished the vivacity of youth, and that taste for simple pleasures which so seldom survives a mixed and active intercourse with the world. The charm which this happy feeling communicated to his conversation and society, had something in it irresistibly pleasing. He was no less the delight of his friends than the pride of his country."

As it may possibly be imagined that the warmth of juvenile gratitude, combined with strong professional admiration, might have dictated some part of the above eulogium, which was written at a moment of high excitement, I have much satisfaction in adding the deliberate testimony of a perfectly competent authority. The following inscription, written by Sir James Mackintosh for a monument at Bath, is no less creditable to the sagacity and taste of its accomplished author, than it is honourable to the memory of his gallant friend.

Sacred to the Memory
OF
SIR SAMUEL HOOD, BART.
Knight of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath,
And nominated Grand Cross thereof;
Knight of St. Ferdinand and of Merit;
Knight Grand Cross of the Sword;
Vice-Admiral of the White;
And Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty's Fleet
In the East Indies.

An Officer of the highest distinction
Among the illustrious Men
Who rendered their own age the brightest period
In the Naval History of their Country:
In whom the same simplicity, calmness, and firmness,

Which gave him full command of his science and skill
In the midst of danger, secured also the rectitude
Of his judgment in its most rapid decisions,
Preserved the integrity and kindness of his nature
Undisturbed amidst the agitations of the world,
And diffused a graceful benignity
On the frank demeanour of his generous profession:
Whose character was an example of the natural union
Of a gallant spirit with a gentle disposition,
And of private affection with public honour:
Whose native modesty was unchanged by renown.

This Column is erected
By the attachment and reverence of British Officers,
Of whom many were his admiring followers
In those awful scenes of war which, while
They called forth the grandest qualities of human nature,
In him, likewise gave occasion for the exercise of its
Most amiable virtues.

Fortunately for me, however, Sir Samuel Hood's death did not occur till more than two years after I reached India. Owing to his kindness, I was enabled to visit the interior of the peninsula of Hindoostan, on two different occasions, and likewise to perform a journey of more than a thousand miles on the island of Java. Before touching on these extensive themes, I must give a short account of an alligator-hunt, at a place called Nellivelley, near Trincomalee, got up for the Admiral's express amusement, and performed by a corps of Malays in the British service, the 1st Ceylon Regiment.

Very early in the morning of the 22d of September, the party, which consisted of several ladies and a large proportion of red coats and blue coats, were summoned from their beds to set forth on this expedition. The Admiral, as usual, was up, dressed, and on horseback, long before any of the rest of the company, whom he failed not to scold or to quiz, as they severally crept out of their holes, rubbing their eyes, and very much doubting whether the pleasures of the sport were likely to compensate for the horrible bore of early rising. In other countries the hour of getting up may be left to choice; in India, when anything active is to be done, it is a matter of necessity; for after the sun has gained even a few degrees of altitude, the heat and discomfort, as well as the danger of exposure, become so great, that all pleasure is at an end. This circumstance limits the hours of travelling and of exercise in the East very inconveniently, and introduces modifications which help in no slight degree to give a distinctive character to Indian manners.

As there was little risk of being too late on any party of which Sir Samuel Hood took the lead, the day had scarcely begun to dawn when we all cantered up to the scene of action. The ground lay as flat as a marsh for many leagues; here and there the plain was spotted with small stagnant lakes, connected together by sluggish streams or canals, scarcely moving over beds of mud, between banks fringed with a rank crop of draggled weeds, and giving birth to clouds of musquitoes. The chill atmosphere of the morning felt so thick and clammy, it was impossible for the most confident in his own strength and health not to think of agues, jungle fevers, and all the hopeful family of malaria. The hardy native soldiers, who had occupied the ground during the night in despite of the miasmata, were drawn up to receive the Admiral; and a very queer guard of honour they formed. The whole regiment had stripped off their uniform, and every other stitch of clothing, save a pair of short trousers, and a kind of sandal. In place of a firelock, each man bore in his hand a slender pole, about six feet in length, to the extremity of which was attached the bayonet of his musket. His only other weapon was the formidable Malay crease, a sort of dagger, or small edition of the waving two-edged sword with which the angel Michael is armed in Raphael's picture of the Expulsion of our First Parents from Paradise.

Soon after the commander-in-chief came to the ground, the regiment was divided into two main parties, and a body of reserves. The principal columns, facing one to the right, the other to the left, proceeded to occupy different points in one of those sluggish canals I have already mentioned, connecting the lakes or pools scattered over the plain. These detachments, being stationed about a mile from one another, inclosed an interval where, from some peculiar circumstances known only to the Malays (who are passionately fond of this sport), the alligators were sure to be found in great numbers. The troops formed themselves across the canal in three parallel lines, ten or twelve feet apart; but the men in each line stood side by side, merely leaving room enough to wield their pikes. The canal may have been about four or five feet deep in the middle of the stream, if stream it can be called, which scarcely moved at all. The colour of the water when undisturbed was a shade between ink and coffee; but no sooner had the triple line of Malays set themselves in motion, and the mud got stirred up, than the consistence and colour of the fluid became like those of pease-soup.

On every thing being reported ready, the soldiers planted their pikes before them in the mud, and, if I recollect right, each man crossing his neighbour's weapon, and at the word 'march,' away they all started in full cry, sending forth a shout, or war-whoop, sufficient to curdle the blood of those on land, whatever effect it may have had on the inhabitants of the deep. As the two divisions of the invading army, starting from opposite ends of the canal, gradually approached each other in pretty close column, screaming and yelling with all their souls, and striking their pikes deep in the slime before them, the startled animals naturally retired towards the unoccupied centre. Generally speaking, the alligators, or crocodiles (for I believe they are very nearly the same), had sense enough to turn their long tails upon their assailants, and to scuttle off as fast as they could towards the middle part of the canal. But every now and then one of the terrified monsters, either confused by the sound, or provoked by the prick of a pike, or mystified by the turbid nature of the stream, floundered backwards, and by retreating in the wrong direction broke through the first, second, and even third line of pikes. This, which would have been anything but an amusement to unpractised hands, was the perfection of sport to the delighted Malays. A double circle of soldiers was speedily formed round the wretched aquatic who had presumed to pass the barrier. By means of well-directed thrusts with numberless bayonets, and the pressure of some

dozens of feet, the poor brute was often fairly driven beneath his native mud. When once there, his enemies half-choked and half-spitted him, till at last they put an end to his miserable days in regions quite out of sight, and in a manner as inglorious as can well be conceived.

For the poor denizens of the pool, indeed, it was the choice between Scylla and Charybdis with a vengeance; and I am half-ashamed to acknowledge the savage kind of delight with which we stood on the banks, and saw the distracted creatures rushing from one attack right into the jaws of another. The Malays in their ecstacy declared that the small fry from one side rushed down the throats of the big ones whom they met flying in the opposite direction. But this seems very questionable, though positively asserted by the enraptured natives, who redoubled their shouts as the plot thickened, and the two bodies of troops, marching from opposite quarters, drew within a hundred yards of each other. The intermediate space was now pretty well crowded with alligators, swimming about in the utmost terror; at times diving below, and anon showing their noses well plastered with mud high above the surface of the dirty stream; or occasionally making a furious bolt, in sheer despair, right at the phalanx of Malays. On these occasions half-a-dozen of the soldiers were often upset, and their pikes either broken or twisted out of their hands, to the infinite amusement of their companions, who speedily closed up the broken ranks, as if their comrades had been shot down in battle. The killed were none, but the wounded many; yet no man flinched in the least.

The perfection of the sport appeared to consist in detaching a single alligator from the rest, surrounding and attacking him separately, and spearing him till he was almost dead. The Malays then, by main strength, forked him aloft, over their heads, on the end of a dozen pikes, and, by a sudden jerk, pitched the conquered monster far on the shore. As the alligators are amphibious, they kept to the water no longer than they found they had an advantage in that element; but as the period of the final mêlée approached, on the two columns of their enemy closing up, the monsters lost all discipline, floundered, and ploutered up the weedy banks, scuttling away to the right and left, helter-skelter. "Sauve qui peut!" seemed to be the fatal watchword for their total rout. That prudent cry would no doubt have saved many of them, as it has saved other vanquished forces, had not the Malays judiciously placed beforehand their reserve on each side of the river to receive the distracted fugitives, who, bathed in mud, and half-dead with terror, but still in a prodigious fury, dashed off at right angles from the canal, in hopes of gaining the shelter of a swampy pool, overgrown with reeds and bulrushes, but which, alas for most of the poor beasts! they were never doomed to reach. The concluding battle between these retreating and desperate alligators and the Malays of the reserve was formidable enough. Indeed, had not the one party been fresh, the other exhausted, one confident, the other broken in spirit, it is quite possible that the crocodiles might have worsted the pirates, as the Malays are called in every other part of the world but the East, where they are generally admitted to be as good a set of people as any of their neighbours.

It is needless to say, that while all this was going on, our gallant admiral, Sir Samuel Hood, was a pretty busy spectator. His eagle eye glanced along the canal, and at a moment took in the whole purpose of the campaign. As the war advanced, and sundry small affairs of outposts took place, we could see his face flushing with delight. But when the first alligator was cast headlong and gasping at his feet, pierced with at least twenty pike wounds, and bristled with half-a-dozen fragments of these weapons fractured in the onslaught, the whole plain rung with his exclamation of boyish delight. When the detachments closed in upon their prey, and every moment gave birth to some new prodigy of valour, or laid a whole line of the Malay soldiers prostrate on the muddy stream, like so many nine-pins, I verily believe that, if none of his own people had been present, the Admiral would have seized a pike himself, and jumped into the thickest of the fight, boots, sword, cocked hat, and all! As it was, he kept himself close to the banks, and rivalled the best Malay amongst them in yelling and cheering on the forces to their duty. This intensity of eagerness had well nigh proved rather untoward for his Excellency's dignity, if not his safety; for, in spite of the repeated warnings of the English officers of the regiment, who knew from former hunts what was sure to happen eventually, the Admiral persisted in approaching the edge of the canal as the final act of the alligators' tragedy commenced. And as we, his poor officers, were of course obliged to follow our chief into any danger, a considerable party of us found ourselves rather awkwardly placed between the reserve of Malays already spoken of and the canal, just as the grand rush took place at the close of the battle. If the infuriated crocodiles had only known what they were about, and had then brought their long sharp snouts, and still harder tails, into play, several of His Majesty's officers might have chanced to find themselves in a scrape. As it was, we were extremely near being wedged in between the animals' noses and the pikes and creases of the wild Malays. It was difficult, indeed, to say which of the two looked at that moment the more savage; the triumphant natives or the flying troop of alligators walloping away from the water. Many on both sides were wounded, and all, without exception, covered with slime and weeds. Some of our party were actually pushed over, and fell plump in the mud, to the very provoking and particular amusement of the delighted Admiral, whose superior adroitness enabled him to avoid such an undignified catastrophe, by jumping first on one side and then on the other, in a manner which excited both the mirth and the alarm of his company; though, of course, we took good care rather to laugh with our commander-in-chief than at him.

I forget the total number of alligators killed, but certainly there could not have been fewer than thirty or forty. The largest measured ten feet in length, and four feet girth, the head being exactly two feet long. Besides these great fellows, we caught alive a multitude of little ones, nine inches long, many of which we carried back to Trincomalee. Half-a-dozen of these were kept in

tubs of water at the Admiralty House for many days; the rest being on carried on board, became great favourites amongst the sailors, whose queer taste in the choice of pets has been already noticed.

CHAPTER XXV.

PIC-NIC PARTY IN THE CAVE OF ELEPHANTA.

From Trincomalee we sailed back again to Bombay, the only port in India possessing docks sufficiently capacious, and a harbour commodious enough, for so large a ship as the Illustrious. This was the second visit I paid to that most interesting of all the presidencies. On two subsequent occasions I had even better opportunities of becoming acquainted with its merits; for I had by that time made two extensive journeys across the country, and was therefore more or less familiar with various oriental topics. Nevertheless, Bombay continues to hold its ground as the place best worth seeing of any spot I have visited in India.

The fascinations of society at Bombay, in the particular circle to whose intimacy I had the happiness to be admitted on these occasions, were certainly very great; and in a pretty extensive experience since, I have hardly found them matched. To think of studying to any good purpose the mouldering antiquities of the Hindoos, or of speculating with spirit on the manners and customs of the existing generation of the natives, while the conversation of such specimens of my own country folks lay within reach, was totally out of the question. And this feeling being shared by all the party, it was considered a most brilliant idea to unite the two sources of interest in one expedition.

"Why should we not," said one of the ladies, (who, alas! is now no more,) "why should we not make a regular expedition in a body to Elephanta? not for a mere visit of an hour or two, but to remain a week or ten days, during which we might examine the caves at leisure, draw them, describe them, and, in short, perform such a course of public antiquarian services as were never before undertaken!"

The notion was eagerly caught up by the company; one of whom, an officer of the engineers, called out,

"I'll send over a couple of tents, to be pitched before the mouth of the cave: one for the ladies, the other for the attendants and kitchen, while the gentlemen may pick out the softer bits of pavement within the cave to spread their beds on."

"I'll send cooks," cried another.

"I'll be the caterer of our mess," shouted a third, "and take care of the commissariat department."

"And I," said a gentleman, who alone of all the party lingered on the spot, nearly twenty years after those merry days, "I shall see that you have wine enough, and plenty of Hodgson's pale ale."

All were eager to be of use, and nothing was thought of but making arrangements. We hired bunder boats, or native launches, to transport the heavy baggage, the tents, tables, and victuals; while it fell to my lot to provide smaller and faster-moving boats called gigs, for the accommodation of the ladies. We passed over in detachments: some early in the morning, and others, whose business kept them in the fort, later in the afternoon; but in the course of a couple of days we were all established close to the scene of operations, and ready to commence working in earnest.

When I come to describe the method of travelling in India, it will not seem surprising how readily we made ourselves comfortably at home on the island of Elephanta. Most of the gentlemen slept actually within the cave, either boxed up in their palankeens, or on mattresses, which they spread in the little niches or chapels carved out of the living rock on the sides of the cavern.

The first day was passed in rambling up and down the aisles, if they may be so called, of this wonderful cathedral, which the Hindoos of past ages had hewn out of the solid stone. The sculptures on the wall being varied in every possible way, within the fantastic limits of their extravagant theology, the effect was almost bewildering to those who viewed this wild scene for the first time. Even to those who had witnessed it once or twice before, it was impressive in a degree very difficult to describe. The imagination of a newcomer like myself was carried back irresistibly to dark periods of traditional history, where everything appeared nearly as vague and indistinct as the recollection of a fairy tale. To those again who had studied the subject long, and made themselves acquainted not only with the religion of the natives, but with their peculiar style of representing their gods, the cave of Elephanta offered a rich feast of research; and there could be heard, from time to time, loud expressions of delight from these adepts in the science of oriental antiquarianism, when they lighted upon any group particularly fertile in characteristic attributes of the deities they were in quest of.

Towards the end of the day, the party, which had hung together more or less during the morning, fell to pieces. Some of the gentlemen straggled into the jungle to catch a shot at a parrot or a monkey; while others, exhausted with the closeness of the cave, and the labour of climbing up to examine the details, stretched themselves in the shade, under the fly, as it is called (or roof), of a large tent, beneath which the air passed freely along, in consequence of the canvas walls being removed. For my own part, I could hardly detach myself for more than a few minutes at a time from the temple, but wandered backwards and forwards with a restless kind of impatience of my own ignorance, which was rather aggravated than relieved by the snatches of explanation won from more experienced orientalists. During the whole time of dinner, I could think of nothing but the indistinct figures on the dark walls which inclosed us on three sides; and I stole away from table as soon as I could, to regale myself with this antiquarian banquet, till the night closed in. I then tried a walk in the open air, but felt the chill land-wind breathing through the damp underwood afford only a deceitful kind of refreshment which soon passed away, and left my brow throbbing and feverish with the intense excitement of the day. My companions declared themselves sick of the

cave ; and as I could talk of nothing else, I was no society for them, nor they for me ; so off I slipped very early to my cot, spread in one of the little recesses already mentioned, lying on the left or eastern side of the principal excavation. Without taking off my clothes, I threw myself down, and in the course of a few minutes, as I imagined, fell asleep.

It is the fashion in India to burn a lamp in every sleeping apartment ; not a vulgar rushlight, inclosed, as in England, in a wretched case of perforated tin, like a stable-lantern, but a small bright flame rising from a classical-shaped bronze vessel, worthy of Etruria, filled with oil expressed either from the cocoa-nut or the sesamé, and as clear as crystal. What is the origin of this oriental custom of burning a light in the bed-chamber, I could never learn exactly. Some persons allege that it affords a protection from the snakes which are said to prevail in those regions ; though I never had the fortune to see a single one of them in all the different journeys I made across the continent and islands of India. Whatever be the cause, the practice is so universal, that our servants, who in that country are the most perfect machines imaginable, continued, even in the cave, to place lights by our bed-sides, as a matter of course. A thousand such lamps, however, as were flickering on the stone floor of our huge apartment, would have served very feebly to illuminate even the small portion of the gorgeous temple which I then occupied.

After lying asleep for some time, as I thought, I either awoke, or believed I did, and, on looking round, was not a little startled to find myself alone in such a strange place, of the real nature of which I had but an obscure recollection. The solitary lamp appeared to have gained far more power, for the whole cave now seemed as light as if the sun had been shining into it. On turning round to discover where I could possibly have got to, and looking up, I beheld, with a feeling of indistinct alarm, and of much uncertainty as to the reality or visionary nature of what I was gazing upon, a huge figure, half male and half female. I remembered, that during the morning, we had been told by one of the learned folks of our party, that in the Hindoo mythology such a monster was to be found, with the jaw-breaking name of Ardhanar-Ishwar. As I strained my eyes to examine this fantastic figure, I asked myself over and over again whether I could be awake or was still asleep. The foaming cups of Hodgson's pale ale, and the ruby-coloured nectar of Château-Margaux, at a pretty late dinner, may possibly have helped this mystification, while they certainly took nothing from the interest of the dream, if dream it were. The gigantic image at which I was looking, though at first it seemed detached and in motion, appeared, on closer examination, to be sculptured in high relief on the the hard rock of the mountain. This strange hermaphrodite seemed gifted with four arms (which is one of those clumsy devices by which the Hindoo artists seek to convey an idea of power), and standing not quite erect, but inclining a little, with the foremost of its right arms resting on the hump of the famous Nundi, the bull of Shiva, on which it is the fancy of this double-sexed god occasionally to ride. The right side of the figure appeared to be male, the left female ; and it is singular how much this distinction was preserved in all respects. The two sides of the cap seemed different, the right presenting the crescent of Shiva, and the female side of the cap being trimmed with curls rising over it, while the male side appeared to be ornamented by a string of knobs, or beads. The ear-rings were different, and on the left, or female side, there hung two ; one of them a *bali*, or jewel, for the upper part of the ear, the other a large ring ; while the male side carried one only, and the ear being lengthened and stretched downwards towards the shoulder. The armlets also, appeared different ; the two right or male arms being both encompassed by a thin metal bar, unjoined at the ends (a common ornament in the East), and the left, or female arms, encircled by a broader ornament. Each of the right-hand wrists was clasped by one ornament, the left by two bracelets. The inner right hand, which was in good preservation, bore a ring on the little finger. The inner left hand, which was also unbroken, carried two rings ; one on the little finger, the other on the middle finger. The inner right hand held the snake called cobra di capella, the head of which rose aloft as if listening to the figure. The outer right hand rested on the horn of the bull, while the elbow was placed on the hump. Both the serpent and the bull Nundi marked out the god Shiva. From the left breast of this curious figure being that of a female, and from its being single, the idea has arisen that the intention was to represent an Amazon. But this is clearly a mistake. And indeed the same distinction of the sexes observed between the appearance of the right and left sides of the principal figure extend to all the others in this very curious compartment of the cave ; those attendants on the right hand of Ardnari belonging to Shiva, those on the left to his wife Parvati. Long before I could get half through this catalogue of attributes of the celebrated double-sexed Hindoo deity, the lamp began once more to burn blue, the figures on the wall faded gradually away from my sight, and, in spite of every effort to continue the observations, I dropped again on my pillow fast asleep. During the whole of our stay at Elephanta, I was never afterwards troubled with such visions ; for the labours and amusements, to say nothing of the festivities of our glorious and patent pic-nic, disposed all the party to good sound sleep.

At first we set rather confusedly to work, without much discipline, in our examination of the cave ; but as the task was extensive, and we had undertaken to do it properly, some systematic arrangement became absolutely necessary. Mr. William Erskine had agreed, with the assistance of his friends, to draw up the account of the cave, and we placed ourselves under his orders as the captain, or chief. The description which was produced by this united service is by far the most exact and minute that has ever been made of Elephanta, and was afterwards published in the Bombay Transactions, vol. i. These details undoubtedly owe most of their interest to the skill and taste with which the accomplished writer has arranged them ; but as he always very disinterestedly considered his account as the joint property of the party who aided his researches, I have not scrupled, in speaking of the caves, to borrow freely from materials which I helped to collect.

His first assistant (the original proposer of the scheme) was a lady of high qualifications as an artist; not a mere fashionable screen-sketcher and murderer of the picturesque, but a regular painter, trained by long study, and under the influence of good taste. It is grievous to think that so much worth, and beauty, and talents, and such extensive knowledge, should so soon have sunk into the grave; and the smart is, indeed, very bitter which accompanies such recollections, when we feel that they are taken away from us for ever. Perhaps there has very seldom existed any person whose loss has been so truly regretted by the circle of her friends, on account of the hopeless difficulty of supplying her place. As it was at all times a piece of good-fortune to find one's self in the same party with this charming person, even when it was left to the chapter of accidents to provide opportunities of conversation, it was considered the greatest of all possible catches to secure her companionship for so many days, and in such a place as Elephanta.

Our master of the ceremonies very judiciously fixed his principal hand and eye before the celebrated triple head, the most remarkable by far in all the cave. A large mat was spread on the ground, with a table and drawing apparatus in the middle of it, near which there was left ample room for the fair artist's host of merry children to romp and roll about on. Near this spot was also placed the easy-chair of her eccentric, but accomplished and highly informed husband, who refused to undertake any part of the hard work, but quizzed the whole of us unmercifully for the useless, or, as he called it, idle labour we were bestowing on the cave. This gentleman, who was a great experimental agriculturist, as well as theoretical political economist, in short, what may be called a philosopher of all work, was worth any money on such a pic-nic as this. His knowledge of the world, and his talents in the art of conversation, though of the first order, were still subordinate to the boundless ingenuity of his fancy, by which anything and everything could be made to fit the most incongruous phases of his arguments. If in his whole composition there had been a spark of ill-nature, such singular powers of adapting facts to fancies, and such earnestness in driving his points home, would have rendered him the most supreme of all bores, in or out of a cave; but, fortunately for the Elephanta company, the matchless sweetness of his disposition, his thorough good-breeding, his delight in all the amiable parts of our nature, and his constant readiness to oblige and be obliged, carved him out as the *beau idéal* of an ally on such an occasion. Many a time and oft the old cavern rung with peals of jolly mirth, and called us from our various holes and corners, to enjoy the witty sallies of this most amusing of persons, whose endless good-humoured jokes, and queer views of things, were always cracking and sparkling round the drawing party before the principal compartment of the temple.

We took our breakfast and dinner at a long table, spread much nearer the mouth of the cave, that we might enjoy, not only the light of day, and the cool clear air of the sea-breeze, but such peeps of the distant gauts and other points of the landscape, seen across the upper parts of the beautiful bay, as we could catch through the foliage. Of course, we kept far enough back to escape the fierce glare of the sky, which in those climates sends down, especially when it is clouded, the treacherous influence of the sun's indirect rays in a manner almost as troublesome, though not quite so fatal, as his full blaze of light. It may be worth while to mention, that we never allowed beef in any shape or way to approach our board; for although the temple of Elephanta has for centuries been desecrated, and, consequently, is no longer used by the Hindoos, there still hangs about this splendid monument a certain degree of sanctity in the eyes of the poor natives, which it would be cruel not to respect. Accordingly, one of the most beautiful rounds of beef that ever was pickled received orders to march off the island, without any consideration for the wants and wishes of two or three gourmands of the party, whose self-denial proved no match for their appetite, and whose respect for these imaginary feelings of the natives became equal to zero, as the algebraists say. It afforded some consolation, however, to these disappointed members of the pic-nic, to observe the boundless delight with which our native attendants carried away the unspeakable abomination of the round of beef. The cow and bull, in every shape, are held sacred by the Hindoos; and even those castes who object to no other meat would much rather die than taste that of an ox.

I was once gravely assured, that in the penal codes of Hindoostan it is set down as a crime of greater magnitude for a man to jump over a cow, than to kill his own mother!—a strangely fantastic classification, surely. Until I heard of this singular law, I certainly had no more thoughts of committing one of these crimes than the other; but, ever after receiving this curious piece of information, I could never see a cow reposing in a meadow, without feeling a perverse desire to make a run and leap over her. I actually ventured to try the experiment once in the Green Park, and was very nearly paying the penalty of my Hindoo sacrilege; for the good lady (I mean the cow), astonished at the proceeding, tossed up her head, and all but spitted me on her horns.

Since the above statement was written, I have discovered that I was entirely in error as to the Hindoo superstition here alluded to. Nevertheless, I let the paragraph stand, as it affords a pretty fair specimen of the manner in which a raw traveller, poking about greedily and indiscreetly in search of what he calls characteristic information, may sometimes manage to be taken in. A quizzical friend of mine at Bombay, observing my head half-turned with the glare of Oriental novelties, and bewildered in the intricacies of the Hindoo mythology, thought he would experiment on the traveller's credulity, by inventing and palming off upon me the above fiction about the crime of leaping over the cow. Before presenting to the public, however, so very curious a piece of superstition, I thought it but prudent to make further inquiries as to the fact, and only then discovered that, for the last twenty years, I have been going on relating, with all the confidence imaginable, as a solemn point of Hindoo law, the mere figment of a mercurial cadet's imagination. Verily, if the

cow in the Green Park had given me a graze with her horn, it would have served me right!

Our antiquarian commander-in-chief, after a cabinet council held daily at the breakfast-table, distributed us in different parts of the cave; one gentleman being appointed to count and measure the columns, another to ascertain the height of the ceiling, while a third, a very exact and trustworthy assistant, was ordered to construct a ground plan of the whole excavation. The gentleman named as the chief engineer in this important department of our researches was a medical man in the Company's establishment, who had recently come down to the presidency from the interior, where he had been stationed for some years. He was a single man at the period in question; but most of his associates in this delightful Elephanta pic-nic had the pleasure of attending his marriage-feast not long afterwards.

The fair damsel of his choice had come out to India to join the family of a married sister; but on reaching Bombay, it appeared that both that lady and her husband had died; and although she knew of several other relations in India, they either resided at remote, up-country stations, or were not known to the people at the presidency. On learning these particulars, the captain of the ship in which the lady had taken her passage found himself in a strange puzzle. All his other passengers had landed, and were safe and snug in the bosoms of their respective families; while the disconsolate young woman alluded to remained alone in the empty cabin. The captain could hardly land her like a bale of goods on the beach, neither could he keep her on board; while the poor girl herself, totally ignorant of the ways of the East, could give no opinion as to what ought to be done. The captain, therefore, as in other cases of difficulty, held a consultation with his chief officer, a rough-spun business-like personage, who at once said,

"Go to the governor, sir; he's as good-hearted an old gentleman as ever stepped, and it is his proper business to give directions in such a case. At all events, if you report it regularly to his excellency, the affair cannot rest, and it will be off your shoulders."

"Man the boat! man the boat!" exclaimed the delighted skipper; then turning to the 'maiden all forlorn,' and assuring her that everything would soon be settled to her satisfaction, he hurried on shore.

The governor, Sir Evan Nepean, though he had been many years secretary of the Admiralty, (a tolerably puzzling berth, I guess!) was yet rather taken aback by the captain's communication.

"I'll see about it," he said, though not knowing for the life of him what on earth to do with the lady, who, being young, pretty, and accomplished, might have felt herself rather awkward in the government-house, for Lady Nepean had remained in England. The captain made his escape as soon as he heard the governor adopt the responsibility, by declaring he would think of it.

"You'll see," said the mate to the captain, "that it will all go right by-and-by; this is not a country in which young ladies, so good and so bonny as our poor passenger, are likely to be left long adrift."

He was right in his conjecture; for the governor, having pondered a little on the matter, sent for a gentleman, not of the East India Company's service, but a resident merchant, at the head of a great house of agency in Bombay, one of the most benevolent of mortal men, and certainly one of the kindest and most generally useful in that country of kind offices and long purses.

"Mr Money," said Sir Evan to the man of rupees, "will you oblige me by taking a young lady to live with your family till she can hear from, or be heard of by, some of her friends, as those to whom she has come out are either dead or not forthcoming?"

"I shall be delighted to be of use to any friend of yours, Sir Evan," was, of course, the ready and sincere reply; and in less than half-an-hour the mate and the captain of the vessel were congratulating each other on having got a clear ship at last!

What might have been this very interesting young person's fate, had she on her first arrival found all things as she expected, I cannot pretend to say. Fortune regulates these matters in such queer ways, that our calculations are often sadly put out; but nothing could have been more agreeable than the issue of this apparently untoward adventure. Our engineer of the cave was a friend of the wealthy citizen with whom the governor had deposited the fair lady who had been thrown on his hands by the captain of the ship, and he happened to be asked to dinner there one day. He likewise happened to sit down next the pretty damsel in question; and all this (though, I presume, purely the work of chance) seemed natural enough. The worthy doctor, however, was what is called a 'determined bachelor;' one of those knowing personages who, for reasons of their own, seem resolved never to marry, and yet who, perchance, may be just on the verge of that awful catastrophe, though little dreaming that the noose which is dangling in festoons on their neck will, by the fall of some unexpected 'drop,' become in a moment as tight as any rib of steel in the frame-work of their fate. So, at least, it proved with our Elephanta Benedick. In a happy hour he sat down to dinner, but, it is said, did not even look at his neighbour; for he had accidentally caught a glimpse of her figure and drapery, which, though he knew not why, had rather shaken his anti-matrimonial fortitude, and made his pulse beat five or six throbs faster in the minute than when he first entered the room. Nothing was said by either party; for, by some accident, no regular introduction had taken place between the gentleman and the pretty stranger, and even their names were respectively unknown. At length, the master of the house, recollecting this omission, introduced them to each other, and then called out,

"Doctor, won't you ask your neighbour to take a glass of wine?"

Both names were very remarkable, and might, perhaps, under any circumstances, have engaged notice; but upon this occasion the effect was striking enough; for the lady's father had been a great friend and patron of the doctor some years before, and she had often heard him spoken of at home, as a person in whom the family were much interested. On their names being mentioned, therefore, both the lady and the gentleman started

—turned quickly round—their eyes met—the little god laughed—and on that day three weeks they were man and wife!

"But this," to use the words of dear old Robinson Crusoe, "is a digression; and I must not crowd this part of my story with an account of lesser things, but return to the main thread." Our party, then, in the Elephanta cave, consisted, besides our chief artist and her spouse, of two or three other ladies and gentlemen, extremely agreeable persons; one of these being a perfect treasure on such an expedition, from the extent and variety of her resources, and the delightful simplicity with which the whole were placed at the disposal of the company. There was one gentleman particularly well versed in Indian, as well as European, astronomy, if we may distinguish these things; and our investigations in the cave often rendered his interpretations of much value. We had also with us a very learned person who had come to India as a missionary, but whose zeal in the cause of conversion had gradually evaporated, while in its place there grew up an intense curiosity to investigate the literature and antiquities of the Hindoos. He was just the hand for us, and formed a good pendant to another and still more agreeable companion, who took an equal interest in the modern customs of the natives, chiefly in what related to their religious ceremonies, their costumes, and their domestic amusements. His knowledge of details we found of great use in deciphering and describing the groups of figures sculptured on the face of the rock, in the different compartments of the cave.

Lastly, we enjoyed the society of a gentleman of the civil service, high in office under the East India Company; and the only drawback which we experienced in his case, was the necessity he was under of going across after breakfast to Bombay, where his business kept him till an hour or so before dinner. A shout of joy from old and young always hailed his most welcome return; and as the time approached, many an anxious eye was turned towards the mouth of the cave, happy to be the first to catch a glimpse of his tall figure on the bright sky.

(As I name no names, and make no allusions but such as will be understood by those only whom they will not offend, I may be allowed to say, in passing, that in beating up the world since, pretty briskly, I have rarely, if ever, met, even separately, persons so estimable, in all respects, as many of those who were here collected in the Elephanta cave, expressly to make themselves agreeable to one another. There can be no doubt, in most cases, and little doubt in any case, that time, distance, and totally different duties and occupations in life, estrange man from man, and by gradually diluting friendships into acquaintances, eventually obliterate, or nearly so, all recollection of the closest intimacies. But there are instances, and this Elephanta pic-nic is one of them, in which, by a strange and pleasing mental process, the recollection is not only kept warm, but is even improved in its temperature by time. At all events, the more I have seen of the rest of the world, the more sensible I have become to the merits of the delightful friendships of that day, and the more truly I have felt attached to them, although the correspondence which has since passed between us hardly deserves the name.

It makes me sigh, indeed, to think how busy death has been with some of the members of that party, whom the survivors could least have spared, and to look around and see how widely all the rest are now scattered over the different quarters of the globe. In the course of my wandering life, indeed, it has happened to me to meet most of them again, and several of them more than once. In fact, the extent as well as variety of opportunities I have enjoyed of forming valuable acquaintances has been so great, and the loss of friends by death so frequent, that I now find, to whatever direction I turn, or to whatever fragment of my life I apply myself for topics of interest, or however brilliant the scene was at the time, the view is now almost always sobered, or mellowed, I will not call it "sicklied o'er," with the pale cast of thought, consequent upon the remembrance of these losses. So much is this the case, that I should certainly feel some reluctance in thus disturbing the ashes of my early expectations, if there had not happily arisen out of these promises, in most cases, a far more enduring performance than even I, sanguine as I have ever been, had ventured to hope for. I have read much and heard more of the disappointments to which all men are subjected in this matter; but I can only say, for myself, that in this greatly-abused lottery of human life I never drew a false friend.

Of the Elephanta party, one only of the whole number still hovers round the neighbourhood of the cave; another has been settled for nearly twenty years at Calcutta, and I had the pleasure of beating up his quarters on returning from China some years afterwards; a third took flight, strangely enough, exactly in the opposite direction, and exchanged the luxuries of the glorious and graceful Eastern world for the raw materials of the west, and actually 'located' himself and his family in North America. I had an opportunity of visiting him, too; but such a contrast! "Every man to his liking," certainly; but how any mortal that has enjoyed the pleasures of an old country, and possesses taste enough to appreciate its innumerable advantages, can permanently reside in a new one, is to me absolutely marvellous! Most of those clever Transatlantic writers, who delight us so much by their works of fancy, and who cry up with increasing emphasis the charms of their own native land, seem to take exceeding good care, I observe, rarely to verify their theories on this score by any considerable touch of their practice. They affect to scorn the testimony of travellers who report different things of their country, while they themselves (just as we Scotchmen, I must confess, are apt enough to do, in a similar case) take the best possible means of substantiating the fidelity of such depreciating statements, by seldom returning home again!)

The method we adopted for investigating and describing the cave, was to divide the labour in some cases, and in others to combine our exertions, but, in all parts of the task, to render the work as amusing as possible. While our principal artist was engaged at the proper distance in making the beautiful and accurate sketches which have since been engraved for the Transactions of the Bombay Society, the chronicler of the cave

proceeded, with one or two of the party as his aides-de-camp, to examine the sculptures more narrowly; and having continued his investigation till he was satisfied that nothing had been passed over, he sat down at a little table, carried about for that purpose from place to place, and there, on the very spot, wrote an account of what was before him. When the description was completed, a kind of general council, or "committee of the whole cave," were assembled, to report on the result. Some of the party, including, of course, the ladies, sat round the writer, while others, assisted by ladders, climbed up to the top of the carvings, in order to detect any inaccuracy in the description. Mr. Erskine then commenced reading his own account, while the rest stood by, in readiness to check whatever might seem to require correction. On the occurrence of any remark in the description, which, to some of us, did not appear to be borne out by the facts, an immediate halt was requested; and the point being diligently re-examined, the writing was either confirmed, or altered till it met the approbation of the whole host of critics. This method of proceeding gave wonderful animation to what, under ordinary circumstances, might have been considered dry details. It also put all the investigating detachments to their mettle; generally furnished abundant matter for discussion; and often set us off upon fresh and amusing courses of inquiry.

It likewise not unfrequently happened, that where a piece of sculpture was unfortunately much decayed by time, or injured by the hands of wanton heretics, or chanced to be placed far back in the cave, there arose no small difficulty in coming to any rational conclusion about the matter. Where the cruel hammer of some meddling geological or antiquarian traveller had driven away two or three out of half-a-dozen of a poor Hindoo god's arms, or crushed down his sacred nose, there remained for us little or no resource, except that atrabilarious process of soundly anathematising the delinquent or delinquents unknown. But where there existed any remedy within reach, we spared no pains to throw light on the subject. This, in fact (without any pun), was our chief desideratum; and the scientific heads of the company were put in requisition to devise methods for illuminating the dark parts of the temple. The first and most obvious plan was to stick a number of little bits of wax taper all over and round those portions of the sculptures which were under immediate investigation. But this was found to be troublesome, in more respects than one. The wax melted and ran down, and the corner of the cave in which we were working either became too choky by the smoke and heat, or the lights burned down and required to be shifted. This plan, therefore, was only resorted to when the other methods I am about to describe failed in effecting the purpose.

The sun at no time of the day shone full into the cave, which faces due north, but we found that by borrowing the looking-glasses from the ladies' tent we could catch his rays, and send them to the very back of the excavation, and thence, by means of other mirrors, could polarise our light in such a way as even to make it turn corners, and fall on spots where, probably, never sunlight rested before. The ecstacy of the natives on beholding the success of this manœuvre was so great, that some of them expressed themselves highly flattered by the honours paid to their long-degraded deities. On hearing this stated by the Hindoos, one of the wits of our party remarked, that if these said Gods, Messrs Vishnu, Shiva, and Brahma, should get their heads above water again, they could, of course, do no less than remember that we noticed them in their adversity; a stale Joe Miller, indeed, as every one must remember who has kissed the bronze toe of St. Peter in the Vatican, erst old Jupiter of the Capitol; but it made the natives laugh heartily when it was interpreted to them.

Another device of the same kind assisted our researches not a little, and was of still greater service to us in dissipating nearly all the gloom of the cave, thus helping to keep up that air of cheerfulness which is of such vast importance to the success of every undertaking in this world, great or small. The tea-urn having been capsized on the breakfast-table one morning, the servants naturally spread the table-cloth in the sun on the shrubs before the cave. The immediate effect of this mass of white was to lighten up everything within; and the hint once given, we lost no time in expanding it, by hoisting half-a-dozen other cloths at the proper angles, till a bright yet soft glow of light was thrown upon the principal figure of all at the top of the great division of the cave. As soon as this effect was perceived, all other work was suspended, and every one flocked round the commander of the party, while he drew forth his scroll, and, without any flourish of trumpets, proceeded nearly as follows:—

"The figure that faces the principal entrance is the most remarkable in this excavation, and has given rise to numberless conjectures and theories. It is a gigantic bust, representing some three-headed being, or three heads of some being to whom the temple may be supposed to be dedicated. Dr William Hunter, in the Archæologia, vol. vii. p. 292, describes this bust as having four heads, one being hid behind. It is to be observed, however, that no traces of the fourth head appear, it being left entirely to the imagination to supply it, as well as the fifth on the top, if the bust be Shiva's. Some writers have imagined that it is what they have called the Hindu Trinity of Brahma, Visnu, and Shiva, and very strange historical conclusions have been drawn from this hypothesis. The Hindu Trimurti, or Trinity, as it has been called, does not occupy a very remarkable place in the theology of the Brahmins. The word Trimurti means *three forms*.

"The three-headed figure at Elephanta represents the deity only down to the breast, or a third-length. One head faces the spectator, another looks to the right, and a third to the left; the fourth may be imagined to be concealed behind. It will give some idea of its bulk to mention, that, from the top of the cap of the middle figure to the bottom of the image is seventeen feet ten inches, while the horizontal curved line embracing the three heads at the height of the eyes and touching the eyes, is twenty-two feet nine inches. All these figures, it may be mentioned, are carved out of the solid rock, which is a coarse-grained, dark-grey basaltic formation, called by the geologists trachyte."

When the describer had written so far, he paused, and asked our opinion; on which there was a general demand upon him to insert something by which his future readers might be informed who, as well as what, this extraordinary figure was!—which of the various Hindoo gods it was intended to represent. Thus prompted, he went on again.

"All the Hindu deities have particular symbols by which they may be distinguished: much as the family of an European may be discovered by its armorial bearings. Unfortunately many of the figures of Elephanta are too much mutilated to allow us to resort with certainty to this criterion for distinguishing them; and this is particularly the case with the principal figure. The face which looks to the east, or right hand (the spectator's left), is evidently Shiva or Mahadeo, whose principal face, by the rules laid down for fixing images in Hindu temples, must always face the east, while Yoni generally turns to the north. In his hand he holds the cobra di capella, which twists itself round his arm, and rears its head so as to look him in the face. His countenance seems to bear the marks of habitual passion."

While our accomplished antiquary was writing, the rest of the pic-nickers were scrambling about the heads, like school-boys on a hay-stack, till once more called upon to listen. The above lines (now quoted, as I may mention once for all, from the Transactions of the Bombay Literary Society) were read and agreed to, except some remarks towards the end. One of the company, whose name will appear by-and-by, and who was perched on the top of a ladder resting on the tip of Shiva's handsome Roman nose, called out that these last words were a scandalous libel on the worthy god, whose expression was eminently placid, evincing anything but habitual passion.

"Well," said the narrator, "what do you make of that swelling between the eyebrows? Surely that indicates the corrugator muscle in action, or, in other words, shows that your friend Mr. Shiva is in a rage?"

"I admit no such thing," said the objector, who from his garb appeared to be nautical, "I see no wrinkling of the brow: after a long examination, I cannot help thinking that the protuberance on this brow is intended for the third eye of the god; it is entirely raised above the general surface of the brow, without any indenture such as that which occurs on the wrinkled forehead of Passion. The whole skin of this figure's brow is smooth, except this oval protuberance, which nowise resembles that of Bhyrava, as you called the figure we were examining yesterday in the north-east compartment north of the Lingam, where the brow is marked by deep furrows highly expressive of passion."

Upon this objection being started, the whole expedition assembled as near the disputed point as possible; a temporary scaffold was rigged up for the ladies on a level with Shiva's eyes; and no Lilliputians ever investigated the countenance of honest Gulliver with more interest than we did that of the no less wonderful Trimurti. A couple of additional mirrors were put in requisition to fling a strong light into the cave, and a fresh supply of candles ordered up from the tents. The more the parties examined the matter the less they were agreed; and the controversy began at last to assume that positive and rather warmish character so often belonging to inquiries in which the data are few and obscure. It is then we find the imaginative or guessing process most vivid, exactly in proportion as the reasoning or matter-of-fact process becomes dull. The interest, also, which people take in any such discussions is generally inversely as its importance; and the hope of agreement becomes less and less as the inquiry proceeds. In all probability such might have been the result of this battle in the cave touching poor Shiva's third eye, had not one of our periodical absentees arrived just at that moment. He wiped his spectacles, held a candle to the image, and declared, that until the dirt was washed away we might go on disputing till doomsday without getting nearer the mark.

Before those eager combatants, "the eyes" and the "no eyes," had recovered from the oily pause cast upon the troubled waves of the controversy by this dictum, our head-servant came forward to announce the ever-welcome fact that dinner was on the table! The communication was received with a cheer that made the bats fly out of their holes in dismay.

It is perhaps needless to observe, that on each succeeding day the wine appeared to become more racy, the water cooler, the coffee more fragrant, the tea more refreshing, and, above all, the conversation more animated, gossipy, and instructive. I ought to have mentioned before, that although, unfortunately, there were no singers of the party, one gentleman played beautifully on the violoncello; the effect of which in the solemn stillness of the cave was singularly pleasing. We had also a great store of books; and happening to have some good readers (a rare catch), our evenings slipped away so merrily amongst the olden gods and goddesses of the Eastern world, that we often sighed to think how soon we must return to the ordinary business of modern life.

I lay awake half the night of the controversy about Shiva's eye, thinking how we could best settle this great question; and at last bethought me of a scheme, which with the earliest dawn I put in practice. When my coxswain came in the morning for orders, I sent him back to the Theban, a frigate of which I had then the acting command, and bade him return as speedily as possible with the ship's fire-engine. Accordingly, before breakfast was well over, we had the hose led along and the pump in full action. The deluge which was now poured over the celebrated Trimurti, must have enchanted the thirsty shades of the "water-loving Mahadeo." The Hindoos, assembled to see what was going on, were astonished and delighted, and so, in fact, were we, to discover how clear, sharp, and beautiful the sculptures stood out, after being played upon for a couple of hours, and well scrubbed with hard brushes in every corner. This service certainly had not been performed upon them for three centuries at the least, and possibly not for a thousand years.

At the next sitting of our grand committee on Shiva's well-washed countenance, the following notes were made by Mr. Erskine. "The face looking east has a fine Roman nose, and its brow is swollen, and protruded between the eyes. This was at first regarded as only the swelling protu-

berance between and above the eyelids, which is remarked by physiognomists to be indicative of passion; but having been led to more careful examination of it by Captain Basil Hall, to whose unwearied curiosity the present account owes much of the accuracy that it may possess; and, from comparing it with similar protuberances on the brow of other figures in the cave, I have little doubt that it represents the third eye of Shiva, from which flame is supposed to issue, and fire by which the world is finally to be destroyed. As Shiva had five heads, though he had only one such eye, it is represented on his principal head alone, which, of course, is that looking eastward." (As the centre head faces the north, this observation refers to that which is turned to the right hand, or is looking towards the spectator's left.) "He has mustachios," adds the writer, "on his upper lip; and he and one other figure in the eastern wing are the only figures in the cave that have them. At the corner of each of his lips a tusk projects over the under lip. The lower lip of all the figures at Elephanta seems thickish, and more African than Asiatic. His tongue is thrust out between his lips; his eyebrows are not regularly arched, rather irregularly twisted, and depressed on each side towards the nose, as in those of a person habitually passionate."

So far the historian; but it would seem from the printed account in the Bombay Transactions, that the party were not yet unanimous: for in a note, or protest which I gave to Mr. Erskine for publication along with his account, the following words occur:—

"This head seems to be speaking to the snake; and I would rather say that the tongue is protruded in doing so, than that it is indicative of anger: nor can I quite agree to the account of the eyebrows. They are certainly not arched; but the deviation is not much, nor does it convey to me any idea of agitation, but rather of mirth, as if he were singing to the snake, and gratified to see its pleasure. The dimples at the corner of the mouth, too, strike me as resembling the approach to a smile much more than the distortion of habitual passion; and the corners of the mouth are, if anything, turned upwards. The mustachios, also, lend their aid in giving a fiercer look to Shiva than I can allow is intended by the sculptor."

Thus it will be perceived that travellers as well as doctors can differ, even when the subject of examination is under their eye. In what follows relating to this beautiful head we were all quite agreed; and I add these few lines more to complete the account, than from any particular interest they contain. Indeed, I question much if it be possible, without numerous drawings, to engage the attention agreeably or usefully towards any class of Hindoo antiquities. There are, indeed, some other specimens of ancient Indian sculpture, which may form an exception, particularly an immense statue of solid granite, upwards of sixty feet high, in the centre of southern India, which I visited on crossing the peninsula.

Mr. Erskine concluded his account of the eastern head of the Trimurti in Elephanta, in these words:

"His cap is richly adorned with variegated figures, branches, and flowers; among others may be distinguished a skull, or death's head; a serpent, with various folds and branches of the bilva-tree, the leaves of which issue three from a point, like the trefoil; and nirgûndi, a sort of shrub, which are symbols that belong peculiarly to Shiva; a few curls run along below his cap. Behind his cap the stone is excavated into two narrow parallel slips (not seen in the drawing), the one higher than the other, in which two persons might lie stretched at length, without being observed from below; but there are no steps up to them."

The description given in the Bombay Transactions of the two other heads is equally minute, graphic, and strictly accurate; and nobody should visit the cave without that account to guide them. At this distance from the spot, however, those details, so peculiarly interesting when present, are apt to become tiresome.

This magnificent triad lies in a recess cut in the rock, to the depth of thirteen feet, including the thickness of the door-way screen, or wall, which is about two feet and a half. The basement is raised about two feet nine inches from the ground. In the corners of the threshold are two holes, as if door-posts had been inserted in them; and in the floor is a groove, as if for receiving a screen, which may have been occasionally let down to conceal the group.

The occurrence of a triple head of such magnitude, and of such skill and beauty in the workmanship, in a spot so much within the range of observation, has naturally led travellers into various speculations as to its origin and the object of its sculptors. On this subject, the following remarks of Mr. Erskine are possessed of considerable interest, not only with reference to this particular section of the Elephanta cave, but as they relate to a curious branch of the fantastic mythology of the Hindoos.

"Such, then, is the remarkable figure that occupies the most conspicuous place in the temple, and which of late has generally been regarded as the Hindoo Trinity: but it appears that, if our opinions be guided by a general examination of this figure, compared with the others in the excavation, and with the apparent design of the cave, little doubt will be left that the whole excavation is a temple dedicated to Shiva alone, who is also singly represented by the three-headed bust. The impression made on Christians, however, by the view of this triple figure, has had more influence than any regard to genuine Hindu doctrines, or to the legends in the sacred books of the Brahmins, in fixing the opinions most prevalent on the subject of this mysterious bust. To account for the appearance of a many-headed monster in a mythology like that of the Hindus, which swarms with gods of every description, it does not seem necessary to resort to the doctrine of the Trinity, which cannot be correctly said to have a place in the theology of the Hindoos.*"

* Bombay Transactions, vol. i.

CHAPTER XXVI.

MYTHOLOGY OF ELEPHANTA.

For several days after commencing our researches in the cave at Elephanta, we found ample stores of interest in looking at the different sculptures on the rock, in making measurements of the figures, and in sketching those objects which appeared most curious. After a time we began to feel a still higher description of curiosity, as we gradually became acquainted with the different groups, and recognised over and over again the same features or attributes in the principal personages represented. We then naturally desired to be made better acquainted with the intentions of the persons whose piety, superstition, or political policy, had devised this astonishing excavation. And we expected to derive more and more pleasure from contemplating the result, when the purpose which the artists aimed at was told to us. A general call, therefore, was again made upon our accomplished and highly informed companion, Mr. Erskine, that he should enlighten our European darkness a bit, and instruct us from time to time in the history of the gods, goddesses, bulls, elephant-headed monsters, and other fantastic idols before us. We alleged that we should draw and measure them more correctly, and perform the office of assistants to him as chronicler-general of the pic-nic with more spirit, if he would permit us to have some slight knowledge of what we were about.

"But then," he observed, "is it not proverbial, even here on the spot, that Indian topics are a bore, and that Hindoo antiquities, mythology, and languages are the supremest bores of all? unless, indeed," added he, "such a master-hand as that of Southey thinks fit to touch the subject with his inspiration, and to give to the world at large, in such a poem as the Curse of Kehama, a considerable portion of that pleasure which had been confined before to a few orientalists."

"Pray," said one of the company, "has Mr. Southey ever been in India?"

There was a pause of at least a minute; at the end of which, a gentleman, who had just been reading the poem alluded to, declared that the author could not have been in the East, otherwise he never would have made one of his characters lie down to sleep

'Beneath a cocoa's feathery shade.'

"Why not?" was asked by two or three voices.

"Because," said the objector, "a cocoa-nut tree affords no shade, or hardly any, and no native would ever think of such shelter from the sun; the image is purely European."

"Nevertheless," said a traveller of the party, a man of taste and observation, and long resident in the tropical districts of India where the cocoa-nut flourishes best, "it must be owned that, even if the poet have adopted an image from European customs, his description, as far as expression goes, is most admirably true to the scenery of this country; for no words can give a more perfect idea of the sort of shadow which is cast by the feathery top-knot of the cocoa-nut tree, than those which Southey has used."

A pretty brisk discussion now took place as to sundry other points in the Curse of Kehama, which ended, as such things generally do, by leaving each party where he had begun. Indeed, the hard hits of an argument are often like those of a hammer on a nail, which either drive it farther in, or, if that be impossible, flatten out the head into what is both technically and figuratively called a rivet. At all events, when we came to "divide," which we did in imitation of our betters, the numbers of those who said Southey could not have been in India were exactly equal to those who declared it to be impossible that any man who had never visited those regions, could have described them with so much accuracy both of colouring and mere outline, or with such wonderful truth of oriental feeling. There the matter rested for some ten years at least, when I had accidentally the pleasure to find myself in London, sitting at dinner alongside the poet himself. I told him of our battle in the cave, which, considering the ground it was fought on, and the qualifications of the critics, he knew well how to appreciate. He smiled, but made no comment; while the expression of his countenance was such as one might fancy De Foe's to have been, had any wiseacre begged to ask if ever he had visited the island of Juan Fernandez?

This episode about the Curse of Kehama was of some use to us, by recalling scenes and circumstances in the mythology of the Hindoos, which, but for the immortal verse to which they are so happily married, might have escaped our memories altogether. As, however, the knowledge derived from the poem, to which we often referred, was no more of the kind we wanted respecting the caves than that which Shakspeare and the Waverley Novels give to the minute inquirer into the constitutional history of England, we joined unanimously in a petition to our master in these matters, to give us, in a few popular words, some idea of the religions which had prevailed in this quarter of the East. Thus urged, our friend agreed to try his hand at making the subject a little less dry than usual; and while we closed round him, one fine cool evening, he gave us a sketch of what we required in order to a fuller comprehension of the ancient sculptures by which we were surrounded. The position chosen for this interesting lecture, to use Mr. Erskine's words, "was near the entrance of the temple, where the spacious front is supported by two massy pillars and two pilasters, forming three openings, under a steep rock thickly overhung by brushwood and wild shrubs. The long ranges of columns that appear closing in perspective on every side; the flat roof of solid rock, that seems to be prevented from falling only by the massy pillars, whose capitals are pressed down and flattened as if by the superincumbent weight; the darkness that obscures the interior of the temple, which is dimly lighted only by the entrances, and the gloomy appearance of the gigantic stone figures ranged along the wall, and hewn, like the whole temple, out of the living rock, joined to the strange uncertainty that hangs over the history of the place, carry the mind back to distant periods, and impress it with that kind of uncertain religious awe with which the grander works of ages of darkness are generally contemplated."

Were the account not quite so long, I should feel much tempted to quote the whole of the luminous summary which Mr. Erskine gave us of the rise and progress of the three great religious sects of India, the Brahminical, the Bouddhist, and the Jainas. Those, however, who have any further curiosity on these subjects, will find them admirably treated in the Bombay Transactions, vol. i.

Many of the positions advanced were so entirely new to most of us, and also so different from the crude and ill-digested notions of those of our party who had attended to the subject in a superficial manner, that much animated discussion arose amongst us. In no great space of time, the company in the cave talked themselves into a famous mess of confusion, when they were very glad to appeal once more to the only man of the party who had really considered the points in discussion between us, which related chiefly to the numbers and qualities of the inferior powers in the crowded theological list of the Hindoos. Our friend was now, therefore, called upon to instruct us in the circumstances which had degraded a theology, originally so pure as to possess, we were told, but one deity, into such a multitudinous creed.

He first stated the fact, and then showed us how it applied in practice amongst the Hindoos. "Besides the three great gods," said he, "Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva, there are, it appears, a large crowd of minor deities. The wind, the sea, the elements, have all their gods; the sun, moon, and stars, also; every river and fountain is either a deity, or has a deity to preside over it; so that nothing is done but by or through a god. The greater deities have, besides, a numerous class of dependants and servants; and human passions being once bestowed on the gods, heaven, as well as the earth, has its physician, its poet, and its dancing-girls. In this great crowd of deities there is no man, however capricious or humble, that may not find some divinity, or portion of the divinity, suited to his humour or self-humiliation. If a person find some difficulty in approaching Ram, that god's monkey-servant, Hanumant, may, however, claim his worship. A little red paint thrown on a stone, or on the stump of a tree, converts it into a Hindoo god, and all the lower classes who pass fall down and worship."

"But, pray," some one asked, "do the natives really believe these stocks and stones to be gods, actually gifted with intelligence and higher powers than themselves? For instance, if we had questioned any one of the multitude whom we saw the other day throwing cocoa-nuts into the sea, as to the number and attributes of the gods before whom he was prostrating himself on the beach, what would have been his answer?"

"I am glad you interrupted me to ask this question," said our good-natured preceptor; "for it deserves particular notice, that even in this apparent degradation of the human intellect, if you ask one of the lowest of these unfortunate beings how many gods there are? he will immediately answer, 'One God only!' And I think you will discover, that although they pay religious adoration to stocks and stones, from some superstitious belief that a portion of divinity resides in them, they never confound these subordinate objects of worship with the one great God, the supposed creator and preserver of the universe, but whom they consider as too mighty for them to venture to approach. When the Brahmins, therefore, are taxed with idolatry, they always excuse themselves by alleging the necessity of making an impression on rude minds by means of some intelligible symbols, on which the ignorant may rest their thoughts, and to which they may look for reward or punishment.

"In the Brahminical religion, as there were many incarnations, so the gods are supposed to have appeared with several heads, with the heads of animals, with a number of hands, and other singularities; and, consequently, their images, in such temples as this in which we are now sitting at our tea and toast, correctly represent all these peculiarities, as I have already, in some degree, pointed out to you in the different compartments of Elephanta, and we can do more particularly to-morrow, if you please. But the religion of the Bouddhists differs very greatly from that just described. Amongst the Brahmins, God is introduced everywhere, by the Bouddhists nowhere. The deities of the Brahmins pervade and animate all nature; but the god of the Bouddhists, like that of the Epicureans, remains in repose, quite unconcerned about human affairs, and therefore is not the object of worship. With them there is no intelligent divine being who judges of human actions as good or bad, and rewards or punishes them as such. This, indeed, is practically the same as having no god at all. Good and ill, according to their creed, are, however, supposed to spring invariably from virtue and vice, there being, as they believe, an inseparable and necessary connexion between virtue and prosperity, vice and misfortune. Yet, as the mind of man must have some object of confidence on which to rest its hopes, and to which to direct its supplication and prayer, the Bouddhists teach, that from time to time men of surpassing piety and self-denial have appeared on earth, and from their singular worth have, after death, been transferred to a state of superior bliss; which state, however, they say, we can only intimate by describing it as an absence of all pain, as we can only define health by an absence of all disease. These saints, or prophets, after reforming the world in their life-time, and by their superior sanctity attaining the power of performing miracles, are still imagined, after death, to have certain powers of influencing us. It is these men, transferred by death to bliss, who are the object of Bouddhist worship. This worship assumes different forms in different countries, and is by some supposed to be more widely diffused than any other religion. It is also worthy of remark, that wherever this form of religion prevails in its original state, the relics of these holy men, or saints, are the objects of worship. The largest temples are often in the form of a pyramid, or the section of a globe, and are supposed to contain the tooth, or hair, or some other relic, of the saint.

"The forms of these holy places have been adopted from the custom prevalent in those countries of depositing the ashes of the deceased under a pyramid, or under a globular mound. The pyramids are often of great size, and on their summits are umbrellas, which are frequently adorned with bells; and sometimes this pyramid is gilded over. Other temples, of nearly similar

construction, but hollow within, contain images to which adoration is directed. The images of these saints have different attitudes, sometimes sitting cross-legged in a meditative posture, sometimes standing upright. As all the ideas of the Bouddhist relate to men, and as no incarnations, or transformations, of superior beings are recorded, it is obvious, that in their temples we can expect to find no unnatural images, no figures compounded of man and beast, nor monsters with many hands or many heads, as we see here. As the priests and scholars of the Bouddhists live in a sort of collegiate establishment near some great temple, we always find a multitude of cells around the excavation in their temples."

I had afterwards various opportunities of verifying these remarks about the Bouddhist form of religion, in many other parts of India, in Ceylon, and lastly in China. At Canton, Lord Amherst and his suite, on their return from Pekin, were lodged in a very extensive temple dedicated to the worship of Bouddha. It was singularly interesting to observe, that the ceremonial duties of this establishment were performed by a multitude of barefooted and shaven-crowned priests dressed in yellow robes, and looking marvellously like some of the religious orders of Roman Catholics whom we see in Italy. These persons were lodged in cells built round the court of the great temple, pagoda, or joss-house, as the English indiscriminately call the religious edifices of the Eastern world. Many of these worthies were made to turn out for the accommodation of the strangers, in a manner which, though it shocked our delicacy not a little, appeared to produce no such effect on the lay part of the Chinese population, who shoved their poor priests about in a very unceremonious style.

I remember once conversing on this subject with a Chinese, an intelligent Hong merchant, who spoke English perfectly; but I could not make him understand our feelings of respect to the ministers of any religion.

"What have we to do with that sort of business?" he asked; "the Chinese government provides and pays for a certain number of priests, who perform a certain number of ceremonies, chant so many prayers, and, in short, take charge of the whole religion of the country, leaving us merchants, and all other persons, to attend exclusively to our own business, without having anything to do with the matter."

In corroboration of this strange indifference amongst the Chinese, it may be stated, that in the letters of the early Jesuits the most bitter complaints are found of the difficulties they encountered, not so much in converting the Chinese from a false doctrine to the true faith, as in getting the slippery minds of their neophytes to hold fast any ideas on such subjects at all.

It will easily be supposed, that one of the points upon which we felt the greatest curiosity during our visit to Elephanta, was the age of these caves. I cannot say that we came to any safe conclusion on this branch of the subject.

"Nothing presents itself in these caves," observed our antiquary, "which can lead to a satisfactory solution of the important and curious question, in what age, or by what dynasty, was this vast temple completed? One fact is worthy of notice, that a greater number of magnificent cave-temples present themselves on this part of the western coast of the peninsula of India, than are to be met with anywhere else, in Hindoostan. The caves of Elephanta, those of Kanara, Amboli, and some others on the island of Salsette; the fine cave of Carli, on the road to Poona by the Bor Ghaut, the still more extensive and magnificent ranges at Ellora, not to mention several smaller cave-temples in the Kohan and near the Adjunta Pass, are all on Mahratta ground, and seem to show the existence of some great and powerful dynasty, which must have reigned many years to complete works of such labour and extent. The existence of temples of opposite characters, and of different and hostile religions, only a few miles from each other, and, in some instances, even united in the same range, is a singular fact, which well deserves to excite the attention, and exercise the industry of the Indian antiquary. Thus, within no great distance from Bombay we have the caves of Kanara on the island of Salsette, and those of Carli on the mainland, both evidently belonging to the Bouddhists; while those of Amboli, also on Salsette, and of Elephanta on the adjacent island, belong to the Brahmins; and the wonderful caves of Ellora possess excavations of both classes."

After listening to these explanations, we returned the next day with fresh vigour to an actual examination of the strange abode in which we were living, respecting the dimensions of which a very few observations will suffice.

The great temple was found, by careful measurements, to be about one hundred and thirty feet deep, reckoning from the chief entrance to the further end of the cave; and one hundred and thirty-three feet broad, from the eastern to the western entrance. It then rested (1813) on twenty-six pillars, of which eight were broken at that time; and on the sides were carved sixteen pilasters. As neither the floor nor the roof is in one plane, the height of the cave is found to vary from seventeen feet and a half to fifteen feet. The plan of the temple is regular, there being eight pillars and pilasters in a line from the northern to the southern entrance, and the same number from the eastern to the western entrance. It is interesting to observe, however, that the whole frame and form of the excavation, which to the eye appears regular, when critically examined and measured is found in an uncommon degree faulty. The pillars in the different ranges deviate from the straight line, some advancing and some receding beyond the proper places. Many of them stand with a certain degree of obliquity; few are exactly of the same dimensions; and the different sides of the same pillar are rarely similar to each other. Even the whole temple itself, which to the eye presents the appearance of regularity, has no two sides of the same magnitude. The left side of the cave is one hundred and thirty-three feet eight inches in length; while the right side is only one hundred and twenty-eight feet four inches. Varieties of this kind are observable in every other part. Some of the pillars are situated from each other at the distance of only twelve feet ten inches, others are separated to sixteen feet four inches and a half, some at fifteen feet, and so on. The size of the pillars is not less various; and as their inequality extends to every

part of the temple, great and small, it has given rise to the idea that it was intentional; in support of which view it has been alleged, that the Hindoos never make the sides of a tank, or reservoir, perfectly equal. But although this may be true, it only shows their want of skill and correct taste. Yet, in a work hewn and carved out of rock, with such prodigious labour and expense as the Elephanta temple, such defects appear astonishing.

We are apt to suppose, though perhaps from habit alone, that there is a natural or instinctive feeling of order in our minds which suggests to us to make the opposite sides of a room, for example, parallel and equal. But I remember to have often remarked circumstances in India which would seem to prove that the natives possess but little of the bump of order on their skulls. I once watched a set of palankeen-bearers who were sorely perplexed when ordered to spread a carpet. The apartment happened to be considerably larger than the carpet; but, for their lives, the poor fellows could not determine how to put it down. First they got it over on one side, then they pulled it till it touched the end of the room. In both these cases the unequal proportions of the uncovered spaces struck their senses, but afforded them apparently no clue to the remedy. They next dragged the carpet into one corner, and stood looking at it, muttering and chattering to one another, like so many puzzled monkeys, for five minutes. At length, after sundry other trials, and many pauses, they finally arranged it, in the greatest perplexity, in what is called diamond fashion, with the corners of the carpet touching the middle part of the wall, instead of being pointed towards the angles of the room, so that the sides were as far from parallelism as could possibly be. They now looked at one another, laughed, and, with the most satisfactory chuckle in the world, left the room, under the conviction of having performed the service upon which they were sent in the most perfect style.

After we had worked for nearly a whole day at the curious avatar of Shiva, a grand hunt was ordered after traces of Bouddhist images. As the detestation of the Brahmins towards poor Bouddh, is nearly as deep-rooted as the hatred which exists between those European sects which differ from one another merely by slight shades of doctrine, the existence of an image of this rival deity in a temple dedicated to Shiva, would be about as great an abomination as an organ, or a painting, in a Presbyterian kirk.

After much examination, we discovered only two figures that could by possibility be representatives of this hostile god; one of which we found in the western wing of the cave, the other in the first compartment on the left of the grand entrance. This spot we generally made use of as a sort of pantry, in which stood cold chickens, biscuits, and wine all day long, to refresh the spirits of the party. I can still see 'reflected to memory's eye' two goglets of the most deliciously cool water that ever gladdened the parched palate of a traveller, filled from a little spring which dribbled over the brow of the rock, just to the eastward of the cave, after stealing out like a snake from amongst the broad-leaved brushwood fringing the edge of the cliff. As the cave faces the north, and the sun at its greatest height shines obliquely over the precipice, it leaves all that side of the hill cool and agreeable, when the rest of the island is parched up and withered. We always took care, however, to have our goglets suspended in the shade, and in the draught. These capital contrivances are earthenware vessels, of a red colour, only half baked, and so porous, that, although the water does not actually trickle from them, it forms a coating outside like dew, and sometimes runs into drops. This being evaporated by the current of hot dry air sweeping past, a degree of cold is produced, the value of which only those who have visited such regions of the sun can have learned fully to appreciate. Of course, when the more serious affairs of champagne and claret came into requisition, we summoned our regular wine-cooler, or abdar, who, by some strange chemical hocus-pocus connected with dissolving nitre, in which he twisted about the bottles for a few minutes, placed before us, as one of our party exultingly expressed it, "a nectar fit for the jolliest of these gods themselves, should they have returned to life and reclaimed their cave." I cannot answer for this; but I am sure that nothing short of the "last pang shall tear from my heart" the recollection of the intense enjoyment of those half dreamy, half waking, but perfectly enchanting two or three hours towards the close of every day in the Elephanta cave; when the ladies and children had sauntered off to their tent, or climbed the hill to take a look at the ghauts of the Mahratta country, or to see the sun set between them and Arabia, while we, luxurious lords of the creation who remained behind, flung our feet on the table, or rested them against some angle of the excavation, thrust our hookah pipes or our cigars into our mouths, swung back on our chairs, and asked and thought of no higher heaven upon earth.

Exactly abreast of the spot where these temperate revels were carried on, sat a figure in stone, with whose countenance and attitude we soon became wonderfully familiar. Many a merry bumper we tossed off to a better understanding of his mysterious history; for, to all appearance, the rogue (being a Bouddhist) had no more business in the Elephanta cave than we Topee-wallas, or hat-wearing heretics of the west. This worthy personage, unlike his brother gods and goddesses farther within-doors, boasted of only two arms; a shabby allowance, in a company where any figure pretending to the rank of a gentleman had six at least. Unfortunately, both of our friend's arms were broken off; perhaps by some of the shot fired by a Portuguese fidalgo, who, Captain Pyke informs us, amused himself in the cave with a great gun. A monkey in a china-shop has some shadow of sense and purpose in cracking the crockery; but the Portuguese nobleman, blazing away at the sculptures of an ancient temple, must be allowed to beat Jacko hollow.

There are still left some indications, however, to show that the hands of this figure rested on his lap. He is sitting (or was sitting, when we left him) on the Padmasan, or lotus seat, the stalk of which is supported by two persons below, very much as occurs in the caves of Kanara or Salsette, which are undoubtedly Bouddhist temples. This statue is certainly by far the most puzzling figure

in all Elephanta; for we know of no instance in which Shiva is so represented: and yet if this really be Bouddh, how the deuce comes he into a Brahminical cave? In the present orthodox Hindoo mythology, at least, it is well known that Bouddh, in so far as he is admitted, is considered as an avatar of Vishnu, incarnated for the purpose of leading mankind into error. He is, therefore, rarely represented at all, and never worshipped in that form. One can understand this easily enough; and yet the sly authorities who devised the great work at Elephanta, appear to have thought it but safe to commence by propitiating so important a personage, for the compartment in which this image of the Father of Evil (if such he be) is sculptured, must have been one of the earliest excavated.

I have taken pains to verify the references from the Archæologia, vol. vii., by examining Captain Pyke's original journal, which is still preserved at the India House. This gentleman, who was afterwards governor of St. Helena, visited the Elephanta cave in 1712; and his account, given in the log-book of the ship Stringer, is not a little curious. It is written in a quaint but graphic style, and is illustrated by several drawings of no great merit, either as to execution or fidelity of outline. The old boy, indeed, seems to have been rather ashamed of himself for bestowing so much trouble on such a subject, for he winds up his description with these words:

"Thus I have given an account how busily I spent 2 days with an Industry about Triffles, w^h^ if I had Rightly applyed to ye Art of Getting of Money, would a' tended to a better Purpose."

It was curious to observe how differently we viewed the temple on different days, and how completely the objects of our curiosity changed as we became more and more acquainted with their history, and with the relations which linked them in one grand series. Fortunately, too, our party consisted of such a variety of persons, that some new thought was perpetually starting up, which being speedily seized upon, was generally turned to good account. I think it was not until we had been poking about the cave for nearly a week, that any particular curiosity was expressed as to the intention which the contrivers of it had in view in making this enormous excavation. At length, some one plucked up courage enough to avow his utter want of acquaintance with the uses which the Hindoos make of their temples, or pagodas; and it was sufficiently apparent, by the looks of the rest, that the majority of our number were in as blessed a state of ignorance as the bold spokesman. All eyes were turned towards our Mentor, who, had he not been the most good-natured of mortals, must have been ferreted to death by our inquiries.

"I suppose," said he, "you are aware that the use made of temples by the ancient Greeks and Romans, as well as by the modern Hindoos, is materially different from that required of them by Christian nations?"

"I tell you," replied the information-hunter, "that I know nothing at all about the matter."

"Nor I—nor I," cried various other members of the cave.

"Well, well," exclaimed the obliging Oriental scholar, laughing, "I must tell you, then, that a Hindoo goes alone to the pagoda, as an ancient Roman would have done, offers his solitary prayers before his idol, prostrates himself in its presence, and then leaves his offering. He attempts in this way to bribe his god to prosper him in his trade, whether that be merchandise, war, or theft. There is no stated regular time of teaching amongst the Hindoos—no public prayers said by a priest, in the name of a mixed congregation—no gathering of the people to go through a solemn service. Their great festivals are like our fairs. Each man proceeds to his own temple, makes his offering at the feet of the idol, then walks out again and purchases sweetmeats. All teaching or reading of the sacred books is in private houses; or if abroad, merely in the courts of the temple, never within the consecrated edifice. The verandahs or porticoes round about are used just as any others equally convenient would be. This use, to which the courts of the temple are applied, will throw light on many passages of the history and sacred volumes of the Jews. It is evident that the religious edifices of nations whose worship is so conducted, need not be large like our churches, since it is not required that they should contain a multitude. In all very ancient temples, however magnificent, the part in which the Deity is supposed to dwell is small, and surrounded by numerous buildings, in which the priests and servants of the temple reside. This seems to have been the plan of the first temple at Jerusalem, and it certainly was that of the older Grecian temples, as we may observe from the Ion of Euripides; and it is at this day that presented by the temple at Mecca. With the Hindoos the great object of worship is not constantly exposed to view, nor is it placed in the larger outer building, or excavation, but always in some inner, small, and dark apartment, usually having only one door, and requiring to have lights burning before it, in order to its being seen, and facing the door, so as to be visible from the further side of an intervening saloon."

I regret that I have not left myself space to introduce several other extremely curious speculations, respecting the religious opinions and observances of the Hindoos, with which Mr. Erskine favoured us. After all, however, I am not sure if there was not fully as much interest in viewing these curious remains of ancient Hindoo sculptures with reference to modern customs, as there was in tracing their origin and connexion with the older theology of the East. We could easily detect resemblances in domestic habits, and particularly in dress, between those which appear to have existed at the time the excavation was made, and those now seen in the bazaars of India. It seems of consequence to mention this fact, because some writers have stated the contrary; and if their reports were correct, it would imply a change in the manners of the Hindoos, quite contrary to observation in other matters. The fact is, there is not a single piece of dress on any figure in the whole cave, except the fancy cap on some of their heads, which is not at this day currently met with in India. The *shela*, or long web of thin cloth folded round the loins, is that in general use all over Hindoostan and the Deccan. The same may be said of the jewels; they are precisely

the heavy, tasteless ornaments which overload the necks, arms, ankles, and ears of the modern Hindoos. "If most of the figures are nearly naked, this," to borrow the words of our great cave oracle, "is owing to several reasons. Statuaries naturally dislike formal dresses, as an encumbrance to their art, since they often conceal or deform the most graceful contours of the human body, the expression of which is the great triumph of their art. In the next place, there are really very few pieces of genuine Hindoo dress. The Brahmin, for example, wears only the *dhoter*, or cloth which covers the lower part of the body, and the *angwaster* wrapped round the other part. Indeed, until he is married he wears nothing but the *angwaster* and the *langoti*, or short cloth passing between the legs, and fastened before and behind to a string round the loins. The *Sanyasi* uses an *angwaster* dyed yellow with saffron, and called *chati*, and, of course, the *langoti*. The Gosawis and the Byragis, wear the *langoti* alone. The only regular parts of a Hindoo woman's dress are, first, the *laguda*, a web of cloth from sixteen to twenty cubits in length, which, after being wound round the middle part of the body, and the upper part of the legs, is thrown over the shoulders, and forms one of the most graceful coverings imaginable; and secondly, the *cholee*, a short jacket, with short sleeves, used rather to support than to conceal the breast. Most of the other articles of dress now worn in India have been introduced by the Mussulmen, such as the *angraka* and *dopatæ*, which cover the upper part of the body; the turban, also, and the *cholna*, or short drawers, have been introduced by the Mahomedan conquerors of Hindoostan."

"It should also be remembered," continues Mr. Erskine, "that when a Hindoo approaches his gods reverently, he purifies himself, and throws off all his dress except that part which covers his loins; and many of the figures in the cave are in the act of adoration. Finally, the principal figures in the cave of Elephanta are gods, who, in most nations, have been represented with little covering. None of the existing figures in this excavation are sculptured in a state of entire nudity, though it is said, that some of those now broken more nearly approached to the state of nature, and were mutilated by the piety or wantonness of visiters. As for the circumstance of the figures being beardless, it is owing to their representing celestial beings, who are supposed to enjoy eternal youth. The mûnis or celestial sages, however, are always represented in these sculptures with beards as aged men. Shiva, also, in Hindoo poems, as well as in paintings, has frequently a beard or mustachios, such as we see in one of the heads of the great Triad."

It has been long a matter of dispute amongst travellers what is the degree of genius and taste which is displayed in the great temple of Elephanta, and in the sculptures, by which it is undoubtedly rendered one of the most extraordinary works of human exertion. Some writers speak in raptures both of the design and of the execution of the several compartments; and it cannot be denied that in various of them there is very considerable merit. On this point, and also on the general character of the cave as a work of art, our party were at first much divided in opinion; but as we became familiar with the details, and gave ourselves opportunities of judging of the general effect under different aspects, and under different shades of temperament in our own minds, we gradually settled into a pretty uniform estimate of the station in which this wonderful temple ought to be placed. Of course, if each of us had been called upon to write down his opinion on this delicate point, some differences, arising out of the variety of tastes amongst us, might have been started; and persons at a distance might become more confused than instructed by such a regiment of authorities.

The following statement, however, which was actually drawn up in the cave, gave such general satisfaction at the moment to the high contending parties on the spot, who possessed close at hand every possible advantage of checking its details, and of judging of its general correctness, that perhaps I cannot do better than wind up with it the narrative of our joyous Elephanta pic-nic. Independently, indeed, of the local fidelity of Mr. Erskine's remarks, in their direct application to the cave in question, they will be found, perhaps, to throw some useful light on certain phases of the fine arts, by practical references to countries in very different states of civilisation, and subjected to totally different forms of government and manners.

"To me," says the writer, "it appears, that while the whole conception and plan of the temple is extremely grand and magnificent, and while the outline and disposition of the separate figures indicate great talent and ingenuity, the execution and finishing of the figures in general (though some of them prove the sculptor to have had great merit,) fall below the original idea, and are often very defective, in no instance being possessed of striking excellence. The figures have something of rudeness and want of finish, the proportions are sometimes lost, the attitudes are forced, and every thing indicates the infancy of the art, though a vigorous infancy. The grouping appears to be still more defective than the execution of the separate figures: a number of little and almost dwarfish figures are huddled around one or two larger ones. Indeed, it deserves consideration, whether the nature of the Hindoo mythology, which represents everything by hieroglyphics, be not extremely unfavourable to the fine arts. Painting and sculpture owe their chief beauties to a successful representation of external objects, and to a happy development of the universal feelings and passions of human nature as expressed on the human frame. But, in the mythology of the Brahmins, such is the number of legends relating to each of the gods, and so much are their various qualities and properties depicted by conventional marks and symbols, which determine the character and situation of each individual, much as a written mark would do, that the ingenuity of the artist is not required to indicate, by the fine touches of his art, what is done by a rougher and grosser way. The Egyptian sculpture seems never to have passed beyond this step; but the Greeks, by their fine genius, burst the shackles which they received from their masters, and their statues and other sculptures will be found most excellent where the general characters and passions of human nature swallow up the understood symbols of the individual represented, and when the painter, rather than the people, speaks. The use of sym-

bols, therefore, seems to be taking a step backwards, and to be degrading that beautiful art, from exhibiting a representation of general nature intelligible to all mankind, to the exhibitions of a local and temporary character, intelligible only to those whose age and country have qualified them to peruse it. When this principle is carried its whole length, it brings back the fine arts from giving representations of ideal nature, and strong and refined passions, to the mere vulgar office of copying external objects. By making them a provincial dialect, instead of a universal and eternal language, this practice has a tendency to strike genius out of the art. The general use of such symbols, accordingly, appears to me to have combined with other causes to blunt the sense of the Hindoos for the fine arts. They are delighted to recognise a deity by his *Vahana,* or by his many heads and numerous arms ; but they appear to set little value on the accurate delineation of a passion, or the fine forms that start from beneath the chisel or the pencil. The passion being represented by its artificial, conventional symbol, the natural sign, or that which would render it true to universal nature, and consequently intelligible to all mankind, loses its value amongst the natives of India. The Hindoos are always children, and amused with baubles ; even their groups representing living beings in pictures are generally like still-life. If there are many figures in the piece, they are commonly seated, and the action is rarely represented, or if, attempted, it is generally an obvious one, like that of a fight or a battle. The various figures, as may be remarked in this cave of Elephanta, are never made to concur by different actions towards one end, so as to preserve unity in the piece. While sculpture is in this state, and while the art of grouping and of telling a story is in this condition, it is not going too far to consider the art in its infancy."

It was a melancholy day indeed, when we prepared to break up our quarters at Elephanta ; for the painful impression dwelt heavily on our minds, that we should never all meet together again. We expected, it is true, still to fall in occasionally with one another, during a morning visit, at a dinner, or in a ball-room. But what poor and unsatisfactory substitutes, after all, are such snatches of intercourse in public, to the deep delights of a well-managed, private, almost secret conclave, in such an out-of-the-way corner ! There, and there alone, those who are most attached can stray together, unheeded by the rest, or sit together, or join in common pursuits day after day, not only without observation, but almost without their own consciousness of the growing intimacy between them, or of the gradual kindling of those flames destined, perhaps, to endure throughout life. Of all spots, indeed, that the queer little god of smiles and tears (who occupies a niche in every mythology) has selected for his avatars on earth, I should say the temple of Elephanta, with such a party, was amongst the most favourable for the purposes of his worship !

With heavy hearts, then, we took a last view of the dear old cave, trudged slowly down the valley in silence, and, hardly deigning to say adieu to the crumbling elephant which has given its name to the island, we embarked in the bunder-boat prepared to receive us, and, just as the sun went down, re-landed at Bombay.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE ROYAL MARINES.
INTRICACIES OF NAVAL RESPONSIBILITY.
SIR JOSIAS ROWLEY.

THE words Marine and Mariner differ by one small letter only ; but no two races of men, I had well nigh said no two animals, differ from one another more completely than the 'Jollies' and the 'Johnnies.' The marines, as I have before mentioned, are enlisted for life, or for long periods, as in the regular army, and when not employed afloat, are kept in barracks, in such constant training, under the direction of their officers, that they are never released for one moment of their lives from the influence of strict discipline and habitual obedience. The sailors, on the contrary, when their ship is paid off, are turned adrift, and so completely scattered abroad, that they generally lose, in the riotous dissipation of a few weeks, or it may be days, all they have learned of good order during the previous three or four years. Even when both parties are placed on board ship, and the general discipline maintained in its fullest operation, the influence of regular order and exact subordination is at least twice as great over the marines, as it ever can be over the sailors. Many, I may say most of their duties, are entirely different. It is true, both the marines and seamen pull and haul at certain ropes leading along the quarter-deck ; both assist in scrubbing and washing the decks ; both eat salt junk, drink grog, sleep in hammocks, and keep watch at night ; but in almost every other thing they differ. As far as the marines are concerned, the sails would never be let fall, or reefed, or rolled up. There is even a positive Admiralty order against their being made to go aloft ; and, accordingly, a marine in the rigging is about as ridiculous and helpless an object, as a sailor would prove if thrust into a tight, well pipe-clayed pair of pantaloons, and barred 'round the throat with a stiff stock. No marine that I ever saw (except one, and he was a gipsy) could learn to pull an oar really well, nor any seaman to handle a firelock like a soldier. Yet both these duties are often of the highest importance to the respective parties, when employed on service in boats, and ought invariably to be taught as far as possible. If the safety of the ship depended upon it, no marine could ever swing round the hand-lead, without the risk of breaking his sconce : no sailors were ever yet taught to march even moderately well in line.

In short, without going further, it may be said, that the colour of their clothing, and the manner in which it is put on, do not differ more from one another than the duties and habits of the marines and sailors. Jack wears a blue jacket, and the Jolly wears a red one. Jack would sooner take a round dozen, than be seen with a pair of braces across his shoulders ; while the marine, if deprived of his suspensors, would speedily be left sans culotte. A thorough-going, barrack-bred, regular-built marine, in a ship of which the sergeant-major truly loves his art, has, without any very exaggerated metaphor, been compared to a man who has swallowed a set of fire-irons ; the tongs representing the legs, the poker the back-bone, and the shovel the neck and head. While, on the other hand, your sailor-man is to be likened to nothing, except one of those

delicious figures in the fantoccini show-boxes, where the legs, arms, and head, are flung loosely about to the right and left, no one bone apparently having the slightest organic connexion with any other; the whole being an affair of strings, and springs, and universal joints!

The marines live, day and night, in the after-part of the ship, close to the apartments of the officers; their arm-chest is placed on the quarter-deck; their duties, even in cases where they are most mixed up with those of the seamen, group them well aft. The marines are exclusively planted as sentries at the cabin-doors of the captain and the officers; and even the look-out men on the quarters, at night, are taken from the royal corps. To all this it may be added, that the marines furnish the officers with such small service, in the way of attendance, as they may require, and generally wait at table.

It is of the utmost importance to observe, that all these minor points, and many others upon which I have not touched, have now grown into such complete matters of usage, that they are scarcely, if at all, noticed. So gradually, however, has this sort of natural or necessary estrangement been brought about between the two component parts of the ship's company, that it now requires only a small degree of judicious care on the part of the captain and officers to preserve the requisite separation, without at the same time giving the least offence, either to the marines or to the sailors.

To enumerate the various occasions upon which the captain has it in his power to show the marines how thoroughly he depends upon them, and considers them as his loyal and trusty body-guard, might perhaps be considered tedious. But I may be allowed to remark, that things have at length arrived at that enviable state, in which the required effect is produced, in all its useful extent, without the operation of the system being rendered disagreeable in its details, or in any respect grating to the feelings of the persons whom these devices are intended to influence and control. The power given to the officers of His Majesty's ships, by the authority of actual law, together with long-established and well-understood usage, is, no doubt, very great; but even these sanctions, powerful as they are, would prove insufficient, in certain emergencies, for the maintenance of strict discipline, were it not backed by the physical force of the marines; or, I might say, with more propriety, were it not always ready to be backed by that force if necessary. The grand secret, accordingly, appears to consist in arranging matters in such a way, that the truth of these things may be felt so distinctly by all parties, that an occasion shall very seldom arise on which it will be necessary to put this singular combination of moral and physical force into action. If the power of the officers is so fortified as to be manifestly impregnable, any idea of attacking it will hardly enter the heads of those who otherwise might feel disposed to resist lawful authority. Thus, in practice, the force alluded to, although it continues in a latent state, is always ready, as at the touch of a trigger, to explode with prodigious effect.

I forget who remarks, that there are no guns more useful or less used than those which line the endless tiers of batteries and galleries at Gibraltar. Their admirable arrangement, and the skill with which the works are kept in order, to say nothing of their inherent force, puts all idea of now capturing that place so totally out of the question, that an attempt will probably not soon occur again; the result of one siege being enough to last for many a century. And so it is (to compare small forces to great) with the marines, who, by a somewhat strained, yet intelligible analogy, may be said to form the Gibraltar batteries of naval discipline.

Amongst the joint characteristics of a soldier and a sailor which distinguish the royal marine, there is generally found a strong attachment to his officer, coupled with an unusual sensitiveness, and anxiety not only to gain, but to preserve to the last, the good opinion of his companions in arms. I have several times witnessed the predominance of these feelings, at moments when it might have been supposed a man's thoughts would be occupied with very different reflections.

I remember an instance in which this ruling passion, as it may be called, was shown to be strong in death. At half-past nine o'clock in the evening, after a long and sultry day in Madras Roads, the officers of the flag-ship were sitting round the ward-room table, enjoying a sober glass of well-cooled wine and water, when their hilarity was suddenly interrupted by the report of a musket, fired apparently close to the door, which, of course, in those climates, is always left open. The officers rushed out, and, directed by the smoke, sprung to the quarter-deck, where they found Evan Lewis, the corporal of marines, prostrate at the foot of the poop-ladder, and mortally wounded. This man, who was as good a soldier as ever served afloat, had stepped on the poop to commence his rounds, with his wonted precision, just as the bell struck three. On asking the question, "Is all well?" and being answered by the usual echo, "All's well," he turned to descend the ladder, when the sentinel brought down his musket and fired. The ball passed through the unfortunate man's body, ploughed a deep groove in the quarter-deck, and lodged in the coil of the fore-brace, near the main-mast.

The poor corporal, who, of course, fell down headlong, was removed under the poop awning, and laid in as easy a posture as possible, with his head resting on the marine officer's lap, a kind-hearted soul, who from time to time wept bitterly over his fallen comrade, as he called the dying veteran, and in vain tried to cheer up his fast-ebbing spirits. The surgeon, indeed, seemed to be the only person unmoved by the scene; he, however, being an old hand in such matters, knew the value of coolness. Having first examined the wound slowly and carefully, he paused for a moment, looked the sufferer in the face for a second or two, and then drawing his breath, while he resolutely kept his feelings in check, said, mournfully, "My fine fellow, if you have any affairs to settle, you must lose no time: you cannot possibly live long!"

The wounded man looked wistfully up in his officer's face, and said, with an air of great disappointment, "I did not think, sir, my time had been so near." After making particular inquiry whether any one else had been hurt by the ball, which he knew had passed through him, he expressed a wish to have the man brought aft who had fired the musket. It was a strange moment when the

murderer was confronted with his victim. "Why did you do this?" inquired the dying soldier, in a voice of the greatest mildness.

"I thought it had been the sergeant," coolly replied the villain; nor could he ever afterwards be made to speak another word on the subject. In all probability he was insane, though there was no attempt to establish this; and he was hanged on the beach abreast of the ship a few days afterwards, having been tried by the supreme court of Madras, within whose jurisdiction the offence was committed.

The pain of the wound gradually subsided as the blood flowed, and the poor fellow now begged that prayers might be read to him. This was accordingly done by the first lieutenant, in the presence of the rest of the officers and the dying man's messmates. He paid the closest attention to what was said; and at the conclusion expressed himself happy and confident, ready to die in peace with all the world, and, as he hoped, also with his Maker. Some wine was then given him by permission of the surgeon, who saw that all must soon be over. When he drank it, he exclaimed, "Ah, that too revives me; but still I feel very weary and drowsy." He was recommended to go to sleep. "Ay! it will be a long, long sleep," he said, with a tone of deep sorrow. But immediately afterwards, as if ashamed of his weakness, he cast his eyes round the group, and in a cheerful voice expressed much satisfaction at dying with all his officers about him. "I only hope I have done my duty to your satisfaction, gentlemen!" were the last words he spoke.

In fact, I hardly ever knew a marine who, if duly encouraged, would not have sacrificed his life rather than depart from his duty. And yet it happens, oddly enough, that by far the most serious professional scrape I ever got into was brought about by the improper conduct of a sergeant of marines, a man in whom I should not have hesitated to place the utmost reliance.

It was in a far-away country; and this man, when on shore on leave with others of the crew, chose, instead of coming off to his time, to send a message on board to say he did not mean to return. At the period when this occurred, I happened to be absent on public business many leagues in the interior of the country. The first lieutenant, however, immediately appealed to the Spanish governor, and begged him to arrest the deserter, and to deliver him up. The governor complied with the first part of the requisition, by securing the offender; but refused to send him on board, unless the commanding officer pledged himself that the marine should not be punished. To this the first lieutenant would not consent; and letters, stating all the circumstances, were sent off to me. As I expected to be able to return in a few days to the port, when I had no doubt of being able to settle the affair, not only without losing the man, but without committing myself by any such pledge, I merely sent a request to the governor that the deserter might be detained till I came back. The truth is, I felt pretty sure that, in the course of five minutes' conversation with his excellency, I should accomplish more than I could hope to attain by a hundred 'oficios,' or dispatches, in the art of multiplying and mystifying which, those excellent but long-winded hidalgos, the Spanish functionaries, far excel the diplomatists of any other land. I saw clearly that, by a slight modification of the governor's proposal, I should eventually regain my stray sheep; and, in the mean time, any mischievous effect on the rest of my crew would be prevented, by the unsuccessful result of the first experiment of desertion. The wo-begone countenance of the poor marine, daily exhibited through the bars of the prison-house, and gradually extending in length as it diminished in width, had a wonderful effect in reconciling the others who were on shore 'on liberty,' as it is called, to the necessity of coming off to their leave.

Unfortunately, however, for all parties, the official business which carried me to the country accumulated so much on my hands, that I could not possibly return to the ship within the time calculated upon, and the sergeant's detention was prolonged not merely from day to day, but, as it proved, from week to week. Since he was well treated by the Spaniards, (though, to be sure, the fare of a Spanish guard-house is not the most sumptuous,) this would have been of no importance at all, but for a technical consequence which followed, perhaps without my being able to prevent it, even had I duly taken it into consideration, which I certainly did not.

The regulations of the Navy require the ship's company to be mustered every week, and a mark or check to be placed against the names of all those who are absent, either with or without leave. When any one is checked on three consecutive muster-days, 'without leave,' the rules of the service require that the letter R be put against the name of the absentee, which means 'Run,' and subjects the offender to the loss of his wages, besides some other awkward penalties. Now, it so fell out, that during the period I was detained on duty in the country, three muster-days occurred, and, of course, as I neglected to transmit any specific instructions, the checks 'without leave' were placed against the sergeant's name. In legal strictness, therefore, an R ought now to have been affixed to the name on the muster-book; but I could not reconcile it either to my conscience, or to my sense of public duty, to take this step, when I discovered, at the first interview I had with the governor, that the deserter had all along only waited my sanction to return to the ship. The sergeant's absence from muster, therefore, was clearly my act, and not his; for at any one moment during the three weeks of his detention I might have transferred him to the ship, by simply speaking those words which I did in the end not merely speak, but put into writing.

The only pledge I gave to the governor was, that the deserter should not be flogged; a promise I could make with great ease, since this description of punishment is never applied to men holding the rank of sergeant. To avoid even the appearance of subterfuge, however, I explained this point fully to the governor before he gave the soldier up, and told him I could not answer for any other punishment which His Majesty's government might please to order when the ship arrived in England.

At the risk of complicating my story a little, but in order to give some insight into the intricate workings and conflicting responsibilities of our singular profession, I feel tempted to mention another circumstance which took place at the very

period when I was thus unconsciously getting myself into a scrape about the sergeant. The orders under which I acted required me to proceed to certain ports, there to remain for a given time, and then to touch at several other places, in execution of various specified duties. But when I reached the harbour at which the sergeant deserted, I found the country revolutionised, most of the authorities to whom I was accredited no longer in the field, and nearly everything upon which I had reason to believe my orders were grounded swept away. Such being the case, I took upon me to suppose that a literal compliance with instructions framed under such a different view of public affairs would have been anything but my duty. After much discussion and consideration, therefore, I yielded to the requisitions made to me by the resident merchants, ventured to break my orders, and incurred the formidable responsibility of independent action. In extensive and remote stations, officers must often, of absolute necessity, be called upon in this way to act for themselves. Indeed, it is obvious, that a man who has not strength of mind to do so, will be very apt to counteract the wishes of his employers, instead of complying with them, by adhering to the mere letter of instructions, applied to circumstances which no longer exist.

At the same time, it is clear that his conduct, from the instant he adopts a line of his own, will be judged by the final result much more than by any statement he can make of the aspect which affairs bore at the place and period of his independent decision. If events, upon the whole, shall have turned out in a manner satisfactory to his employers, he may possibly escape censure, or even be considered a man of sound discretion, whom it may be useful to employ on similar occasions in future. But if the measures adopted by an officer who, upon his own responsibility, breaks his orders, shall have the effect of deranging the economy of the squadron, and in their consequences lead to more inconvenience than a rigid compliance with his original instructions might have incurred, he must lay his account with receiving the penalty of disobedience, or, at all events, submit to the mortifying charge of defective professional judgment.

As I approached the point, therefore, where I expected to fall in with my commander-in-chief, I felt by no means at ease. The motives which had induced me to break my orders appeared sadly weakened by time and distance; and the possible indirect mischief of my having ventured to think and act for myself, swelled hugely before my mind's eye. I began likewise to apprehend that my compromise about the sergeant might not bear official scrutiny; so that it required all my resolution to put a good face on the matter. The result, which, I own, was unexpected, seems not only so curious, but, I think, so instructive, that I shall give it in detail.

The commander-in-chief happened not to be in the port at which I arrived; so that I had to state my reasons in writing on both the subjects alluded to. In a few weeks I received two official letters, and a private note. The despatch which I first opened contained rather a sharp, but a perfectly proper reprimand for having departed from my orders, which it appeared the circumstances of the case, as stated by me, did not justify. I opened the other letter with increased fear and trembling; but it contained, to my great joy, a full approval of all I had done about the sergeant. The private note (which I wish I could feel authorised to publish) contained some admirable professional advice, written in a tone so friendly, that even if the censure which this most judicious of commanding officers thought it his duty to pass upon me had been much more severe, I must have kissed the rod with gratitude as well as respect.

Of course, I attempted no justification; and, indeed, I must have belied my own principles of discipline if I had thought of such a thing for one instant. The fact of my having adopted a line according to the best of my judgment, could essentially have no weight in deciding the real merits of a case of which my superior was the only judge officially responsible to the country. Having, therefore, submitted the whole matter to him, without any qualification or reserve, I was bound, as soon as he said so, to admit that I had erred, and that the censure was just. He ordered me, however, on my arrival at Spithead, to report all the circumstances of both these cases to the Admiralty. This I did with rather less apprehension than attended me abroad; for I made quite sure of obtaining, at least, their lordships' approbation of my address in managing to recover the deserter, with which the commodore had expressed himself so much satisfied.

I never was more grievously mistaken in my life; for, by return of post, down came a rattling despatch disapproving strongly of the whole transaction, and calling upon me to state in writing whether or not the sergeant had been checked as absent without leave three times; if so, their lordships added, it appeared, by my own showing, that I had been "guilty of false muster," in not putting an R against his name. Here was a mess! The vision, the terrific vision of a court-martial danced before my eyes; and for false muster, too! as if I had been accessory in a scheme for cheating His Majesty out of three weeks' provisions!

Of course, in my reply, I made out the best story I could; that is, I stated the simple facts of the case. As, however, the sergeant, culpable as he no doubt was, had clearly been prevented, not by his own act, but by my indecision, from appearing at muster, I could by no means admit that an R ought to have been placed against his name. Indeed, I would certainly have submitted to the loss of my commission rather than have given up that point.

I made no further attempt to justify my conduct in the matter, still less did I presume to defend the terms of the arrangement into which I had entered with the Spanish authorities, and of which their lordships so highly disapproved. Several of my brother officers at Portsmouth, whom I consulted in this dilemma, advised me by all means to send up the letter of my commander-in-chief approving of that very compromise with the governor for which the Admiralty now reprimanded me. But this I conceived could have no good effect. Had I sent the commodore's approval, in the first instance, as perhaps I ought to have done, along with the despatches detailing the transaction, I might have escaped some part of the 'sound wigging' under which I was now made to smart. But it seemed quite obvious, that no

subsequent approbation of the commander-in-chief could alter the original character of the negotiation into which I had entered with the Spanish authorities, and of which the Government at home were the only proper judges. By producing the commodore's letter, therefore, I should have only involved him in the scrape, without getting myself free from it in the least. So I 'backed it out' alone, as poor Jack says, and the affair gradually blew over.

I confess, that the important principle in discipline, of its being an officer's duty to submit patiently to censure, was here put to a pretty severe test. When lecturing my own people upon the impropriety of setting up a justification, I had often endeavoured to impress upon their minds that an officer had no right to do more than lay before his superiors all the circumstances of the case which influenced his decision; and that afterwards it became an essential part of the duty of obedience to admit the justice of the sentence pronounced by the competent authorities. It would, therefore, have been a base departure from my own system to have set about perseveringly to justify what, on professional principles, I was now bound to consider wrong.

As to pleading the goodness of my intentions, I never dreamed of that folly, since the time I first heard the witty saying of a distinguished oriental diplomatist, who declared, that "Every well-intentioned man in public life ought to be hanged!" a paradox, by the way, which might furnish the text of a neat chapter in the history of discipline. For it is clear, in the first place, that since, as a matter of course, an officer's intentions are always supposed to be right, it is nonsense to assume that as a valid reason for doing wrong, which has never been called in question; and in the next place, it seems no less clear, that if a man have nothing but his good intentions to bring into play, without talents or experience to give them useful direction, he is much better out of the way altogether, as far at least as the public service is concerned.

Officially speaking, all this is obvious enough, and the public service could not long proceed upon any other principle. Still, although a well-grounded faith in the solidity of these doctrines may teach us not to argue, but to obey, there must, and ought to be, a limit to submission, beyond which an officer is not entitled to yield, in consideration of the dignity of his station, which it is clearly an important part of his duty to preserve entire. It occurred to me, therefore, some weeks after the correspondence alluded to had passed, and the ship was paid off, that I might advantageously hold some friendly communication with one of the members of the Admiralty on the subject of my recent official castigation. I, accordingly, begged a private interview with one of the Board, an Admiral whose knowledge of the service, soundness of judgment in all things, and fairness of decision, are acknowledged throughout the profession. On being admitted, I addressed him in the following words:—

"I hope, sir, that in the unpleasant correspondence which has lately passed between the Admiralty and myself, I have submitted, as an officer ought to do, to the will of his superiors?"

He slightly nodded assent. I went on.

"But, sir, as I am a young officer, whose heart is sincerely in his profession, and who looks to it as his first object in life, it becomes of some importance to me to lessen, if I can by any fair means, the unfavourable impression which must have been produced by what has passed."

"Well! what have you got to say? You were quite wrong about the sergeant; you had no authority to enter into a compromise with the local government."

"I have been taught to understand that, sir," I replied; "nevertheless, had I acted otherwise, I must have departed from what I knew to be my duty."

"The deuce you would! How is that?"

"It was the practice," I continued, "of the commander-in-chief, under whose orders I sailed, before he sent any officer on a distant and complicated service, such as that on which I was employed, to explain very fully what his wishes were on particular points, as well as on the general objects of the mission. His method of accomplishing this purpose was, to invite to his house the captain whom he proposed to send to a distance, and to give him board and lodging for a week or ten days, as the case might require. The intimacy of habits produced by actually living together, afforded ample opportunities for discussing the nature and objects of the intended service in all their bearings; and as the commodore, with much consideration and kindness, encouraged us to put queries to him upon all the points of difficulty likely to arise, and never hesitated to incur the responsibility of giving a definite answer to our questions, we gradually became fully possessed of his general wishes, and likewise obtained the advantage of his advice in specific cases. Thus we started eventually more distinctly aware of what was required to be done, than if ten quires of foolscap had been covered with directions."

"Well, well, Captain Hall," said the Admiral, getting rather impatient at my long story; "I dare say that was a very good plan; but what has it to do with the case of your sergeant?"

"Much," I replied; "for it did so happen, that in the course of the time I lived with the commodore, I actually put to him this very case, which afterwards arose. And to prove that I did not misapprehend my commanding officer's wishes, I beg to show you the letter in which he acknowledges my report, and entirely approves of what I did."

I then pulled out of my pocket the official approbation I had received abroad, and handed it to my friend, the Lord of the Admiralty. He read it, and exclaimed,

"Why, this certainly is a complete justification of your proceedings, so far as you are concerned. But why did not you send it up to us when you were censured?"

"Because, sir, at all times, and on principle, I dislike setting up a justification; nor had I any mind on this particular occasion to fly in the teeth of their Lordships, by a statement which would only have had the effect of including the commander-in-chief in the scrape, without relieving me from one jot of the censure grounded upon the error I appear to have committed. As I was at least as much a party in the arrangements as my commanding officer, no subsequent approbation of his could entirely exonerate me."

"Very true," he replied, after a pause. "But suppose we should call the commander-in-chief to account for what has been done?"

"You undoubtedly can, sir," I said; "but you will, I hope, recollect, that there is nothing official under my hand tending to exculpate myself at the commodore's expense. The communication I have now made is entirely private."

He laughed, shook hands with me, bid me think no more of the matter, and assured me the affair would do me no harm at head-quarters. Accordingly, I never heard more of it from that hour to this. But what interested and surprised me a good deal afterwards, was to learn, incidentally, that although the Government so highly disapproved of my arrangements respecting the sergeant, no fault was ever found with my departure from the sailing orders of the commander-in-chief. Thus, the following curious set of professional cross-purposes came into play, exhibiting a fair specimen of the difficult and intricate nature of a naval officer's responsibilities in command of a ship on a foreign station. Here had I been sent to a great distance to execute an extensive public service, in the course and progress of which I found things so different from what I knew they had been reckoned at the time my orders were dated, that I was forced to take upon me to deliberate whether it was my duty to carry them into execution literally, or whether I ought to modify them so as to suit the altered circumstances. In the end I adopted a line which my immediate superior highly disapproved of, while the Government at home were rather pleased than otherwise with this breach of orders, because the course I pursued happened eventually to square with their particular views at the time I made my report. On the other hand, the Admiralty wigged me soundly for another diplomatic proceeding, with which proceeding my immediate commanding officer expressed himself perfectly satisfied!

Now, it would be the easiest thing in the world to rig up a good growl out of all this; and to show how unreasonable and inconsistent are the official ways of official men, and how very hard it is on the junior servants of the public to be hacked about and reprimanded, right and left, when they are acting all for the best. But, in the first place, such is not, by any means, my taste; and in the next, such is not my view of the merits of the case. I see no hardship in the matter—quite the contrary; for I can distinctly recognise in these very difficulties and endless diversities some of the highest sources of interest which belong to our service, and marking out the most certain road to distinction for an officer of abilities, professional knowledge, and genuine public spirit.

It seems, indeed, quite clear that an officer is not fit to be trusted with any command of importance who shrinks selfishly and timidly from the responsibility of acting in the manner which he conscientiously and deliberately considers the best for the public service; but who, rather than incur this risk, chooses to shield himself from direct censure by adhering literally to orders applicable only to circumstances which no longer exist. What, I should like to know, is the meaning of the word responsibility, if it be not a readiness to answer for our conduct, and to submit respectfully to the disapprobation of those in authority over us? And not only to submit in form, but to acquiesce cheerfully and sincerely in the better judgment of those superiors, whom it is confessedly our duty, and must always essentially be our best and most manly interest, to obey out and out?

There is, perhaps, nothing within the whole range of active service more infallibly characteristic of a mean-spirited officer, than that too cautious avoidance of responsibility which is so often closely allied to the vulgar itch for justification. What can it ever be to the great and absorbing interests of the public service of the country, that lieutenant so-and-so should fancy himself a more clever officer than his captain?—or that, under all the circumstances of the place and time, the worthy lieutenant might perhaps be justified in what he did, instead of being censurable for the untoward results which have unexpectedly flowed from his well-intentioned but ill-judged proceedings? No government ever could have time for all this special pleading; and, therefore, every officer who (to use the old cockpit phrase, is 'worth his salt,' will resolutely make up his mind to have his professional conduct judged not solely, or even chiefly, by the apparent situation of affairs at the time he was called upon to act, but more or less, in every case, by the aspect which they happen to bear in the eyes of his superiors, at the moment he makes his report. If, fortunately for him, events have taken a favourable turn, his conduct will not be disapproved of; or it may, possibly, be commended; but if, on the other hand, events shall not have turned out to the satisfaction of his employers, even although, at the time of breaking his orders, he may have acted for the very best, he must expect to be well hauled over the coals. Under these expectations, a man should invariably act up to the true spirit of his duty, vastly regardless of any consequences to himself; and while he thinks exclusively of the public service, he should always make up his mind to take such personal consequences in good part, whatever they be, and manfully to apply them to the purposes of future instruction, instead of querulously seeking to raise out of them sources of discontent and virtual disobedience. In short, a strict adherence to the disinterested spirit of technical duty, happen what may to himself, appears to be as binding upon a professional man as the moral obligations of truth are binding upon general society. The smallest departure from either for any motive, whether it be to gain favour or to avoid censure (that is to say, the slightest unfair modification of duty, or the faintest shade of untruth), are alike destructive to the character of an officer and of a gentleman. Such, at least, is the most approved theory of naval responsibility now extant in the service.

But I perceive these speculations (as will happen) have led me far away from our jolly companions the red jackets, to whom, as trusty and cordial friends, it is always agreeable to return.

During the formidable mutiny at the Nore, as every one must remember to have heard, the marines were true to a man, never swerving even for one moment from their loyalty. In all probability, it was chiefly in consequence of their admirable conduct on that important occasion, that they were honoured at the peace with the proud distinction of "ROYAL," by which they are still known. The London Gazette of the 1st of May, 1802, runs in these terms

"His Majesty has been graciously pleased to signify his commands, that, in consideration of the meritorious services of the marines during the late war, the corps shall in future be styled the Royal Marines."

Assuredly, never were honours more judiciously bestowed; and well might the gallant historian of his corps exclaim, "Here my narrative reaches its close, and I will not dive into futurity; but thus much I will venture to anticipate, that, whether in union with his gallant brethren of the fleet, or blended with our disciplined armies on the shore, the MARINE SOLDIER will never forfeit that distinguished merit which he now holds, of loyalty to his King, fidelity to his Country, and unshaken valour against the enemies of both*."

When our maritime force is thus composed of Marines and Blue Jackets, in due proportions, and led by skilful and judicious officers, their united effect is wonderful. So many examples are already before the public that I shall merely record a single instance of the prodigious influence which attends confidence in a leader, and show how materially public affairs of the highest technical importance may be modified by the personal regard of a crew for their captain.

In the year 1810 it was resolved by the Government of India to send an expedition against the Isle of France; and General Abercrombie, having assembled a large force at Madras, embarked in the autumn in a fleet of transports, and was convoyed to the point of attack by H. M. S. Ceylon.

As the French naval power in the Indian seas, which for some years had been considerable, continued to maintain a degree of rivalry with the English unknown in other quarters of the globe, it became of the utmost consequence to the success of the projected invasion, to keep down, by means of a close blockade, the exertions of the enemy's squadron at the Isle of France, their principal naval station in the East. Had there not been a decided superiority afloat on our side, either of numbers or of prowess, or both, it was obvious that the approach of an expedition, for the purpose of attacking the island, must have been attended with the most imminent danger.

The first grand point, therefore, was to keep the French squadron in due check; a service which was intrusted to Captain Rowley, now Admiral Sir Josias Rowley, who then commanded the Boadicea frigate. A more judicious, or, as it proved, a more fortunate selection, in every point of view, was never made since England possessed a navy. Captain Rowley was already well known in the service, not only as an officer of experience and abilities, but as one who had acquired, in more than a common degree, the professional confidence and personal esteem of the people who served under him. At the same time he was, in the true sense of the word, a very strict officer; for he showed himself so just in distinguishing merit, and so temperate and judicious in correcting negligence or guilt, that he invariably ended by winning the affection as well as the respect even of those whom it was his duty to chastise. So entire, indeed, and so general, had this confidence become in their chief, that, after the commencement of the brilliant course of service which I am about to relate, the officers and men under his command would have engaged, at his bidding, in actions of the most desperate character without the slightest hesitation. They had, in fact, no thought or will but his; and as they loved him with all the warmth of the heartiest private regard, they felt proud to acknowledge that their captain's honour and renown were as essentially in their keeping as the glory of their country, and they worked and fought most nobly under that generous impulse which so often renders it a far higher pleasure to be useful to others whom we respect and love, than to seek our own selfish advancement.

The next thing was to secure a point of rendezvous; and for this purpose a force was dispatched to take possession of the Island of Bourbon, lying near the Mauritius, but which, though much larger than the Isle of France, had been left unfortified, from not being considered of one-tenth part of its importance. After this service had been successfully accomplished, the British squadron were so disposed, that the enemy became at last completely blockaded, and could not venture to show a single pendant. It happened, unfortunately, that during Captain Rowley's absence at the neighbouring Island of Bourbon, the second in command, whom he had left in charge of the ships, conceived that a favourable opportunity had occurred for attacking the enemy's frigates lying in Port South-East. He could not resist the temptation of making a dash at the glorious prize seemingly within his reach; but never was any attempt followed by more disastrous results. Two out of the four English frigates having grounded on unknown shoals, the French warped theirs into such positions, that their broadsides acted with the precision of fixed batteries, and, co-operating with the land fortifications, at last effectually silenced the assailants. His Majesty's ships Sirius and Magicienne were burned, the Iphigenia and Néréïde captured; and of all the crews of these prime frigates, only one officer and a dozen men escaped in the sole remaining boat, to tell their unfortunate tale to the commodore.

The defence made by H. M. S. Néréïde, Captain (now Sir Nisbet) Willoughby, is one of the finest things ever recorced; her colours were not struck, till out of two hundred and seventy-seven men and boys, eighty-five or ninety were killed, and one hundred and seventy wounded! Admiral Bertie, in his despatch, says, "The Néréïde surrendered, after a glorious defence, almost unparalleled even in the annals of the British Navy."

Captain, now Sir Nisbet Josiah Willoughby, was made Companion of the Bath in 1815, and was knighted in 1827 for his naval Services. In August 1832, his late Majesty conferred the commander's cross of the Royal Guelphic Order on this distinguished officer, for his military services in Russia.

This formidable loss of four out of the six frigates composing the English squadron, took place on the night of the 23rd of August and morning of the 24th. On the 27th, or within three days afterwards, Captain Rowley, in his solitary frigate, the Boadicea, appeared off the harbour. He had picked up the boat at sea, and had still some hopes that one, if not two of the ships, or at all events,

* Historical Review of the Royal Marine corps, by Lieutenant Alex. Gillespie, R. M.

the officers and men who had retreated to an island in the bay, might yet be recovered. In this, however, he was disappointed; and the triumphant enemy, now become much the stronger party, instantly sent out a couple of ships and chased him away. He had nothing for it but to leave the Isle of France, to proceed to Port St. Paul's in the Island of Bourbon, and there to collect what force he could, to stem the tide which by this time was making so strongly against him. An officer of less vigour of mind, or less familiar with the resources which appear to fall naturally into the hands of men of genius and energy, might well have been disheartened by these reverses. And, what is still more important to remark, had he possessed in a smaller degree the confidence of his officers and crew, or felt less secure of their entire devotion to his own cause and that of the country (which, in their minds, were identical), it would have been utterly impossible for Captain Rowley to have accomplished the services which followed.

On the 12th of September, a little more than a fortnight after the disaster of Port South-East, two of the enemy's frigates, the Astrea and Iphigénie, appeared off Port St. Paul's, no doubt intending either to attack the Boadicea or to blockade her. But our gay commodore, who was not a man to rest quiet under such a threat, tripped his anchor immediately, and, accompanied by the Otter sloop-of-war and the Stanch gun-brig, sailed directly out to meet the French frigates. Just as he was getting under weigh, he received a report from the signal-post on the hill, that an English ship was heaving in sight round the point. This proved to be the Africaine, just arrived from England. The enemy, seeing the new-comer, hauled off in a moment, and made all sail; but before night the Africaine had gained so much upon them, as to keep them in sight after dark, although, owing to the Boadicea's inferiority of sailing, Captain Rowley was left far astern, while the Otter and Stanch had dropped quite out of sight. As the Africaine greatly outsailed the enemy, she closed with them between three and four in the morning, and very gallantly, but rather indiscreetly, brought them to action without waiting for the Boadicea. In the course of not many minutes, she was completely knocked to pieces, her captain and most of her crew killed by the cross fire of the two Frenchmen, who placed themselves one on each side of her.

When the day dawned, Captain Rowley had the bitter mortification to see one more of his unfortunate countrymen in possession of the enemy. But, unlike his impetuous brother officer, he was not so fool-hardy as to risk the Boadicea, his sole remaining ship, in so unequal a contest with two frigates, apparently not the least damaged by the action, and flushed with the unexpected and unexampled successes by which the French arms afloat had been crowned during the preceding three weeks. He therefore tacked, and stood back till reinforced by his trusty little friends the Otter and Stanch; then again putting about, he dashed right at the victors in the recent fight.

The prudent Frenchmen, however, to whom the Boadicea was well known, appeared quite satisfied with the honour and glory of having taken one frigate that morning; for they not only abandoned their prize, but made all sail towards the Isle of France, leaving the Boadicea to recapture and carry back the English frigate, out of which the enemy had removed nearly all the men who survived that deplorable conflict.

This was the first turn of the tide in favour of the British cause. But scarcely had Captain Rowley resumed his anchorage at St. Paul's, where he set actively to work to re-equip the half-demolished Africaine, before he discovered, on the 18th of September, three strange sail in the offing. With his wonted alacrity, he once more got under weigh, and, accompanied by his two satellites, put to sea immediately. One of the strangers had a crippled frigate in tow, which she immediately cast off upon the Boadicea showing herself, and made all sail away. The third ship, a French 44 of the first class, bore up to protect her disabled companion, now clearly made out to be yet another captured British frigate! Undisturbed by this fresh disaster, or rather animated by the importance of the occasion into still higher vigour, the gallant Rowley at once carried his ship smack alongside the Venus, then wearing the broad pendant of Commodore Hamelin, the senior officer of the French squadron. The Boadicea's crew, who for the last month had been eagerly panting to have, in their turn, a regular fight, or, as they called it, a fair brush with the enemy, no sooner saw the French commodore's ship inevitably within their reach, than, of their own accord, they leaped on the hammocks, and, actuated by a simultaneous impulse, gave three hearty cheers. In the next instant they were all again at their guns, which they served so briskly and so well, that in a short time the Venus (the largest French ship in those seas) struck her colours, after a very gallant resistance.

It was then discovered that the captured English frigate seen in tow before the action, was his Majesty's ship Ceylon, from Madras, having the commander-in-chief of the expedition, General Abercrombie, and his staff, on board, on their way to the attack of the Isle of France. They had fallen in, during the previous night, with the Venus frigate and the Entreprenant sloop of war, to whom they struck. Captain Rowley sent one of his assistant sloops to take possession of the Ceylon; and the whole party returned once more to their old anchorage of St. Paul's, at the Island of Bourbon.

There was still, however, much to be done; for although Captain Rowley had captured the French commodore, and retaken the Africaine and Ceylon, none of them were in a state to go to sea, and even if they had been, where was he to muster seamen to fight their guns? These are the moments, however, when thorough-bred zeal and professional knowledge are sure to triumph over difficulties which would defy common-place exertions. The confidence reposed in Rowley's talents, and the personal regard in which he was held by those who knew him, were not confined to his own ship or squadron, but extended with equal practical effect to the officers and men of the land service; so that upon this trying occasion, when the British fortunes in that quarter of the globe were suspended in such equal balance against those of the enemy, that the slightest additional weight acting in either scale might have deter-

mined the fate of the whole expedition, the individual popularity of this great officer settled the question.

Under these circumstances, Captain Rowley, as we say at sea, 'turned to with a will,' and soon got up a squadron sufficient to drive the enemy once more into their holes. The Africaine's lower masts being so much wounded by shot as to be rendered useless, no time was lost in unstepping those of a recaptured East-Indiaman, and placing them on board the frigate. It had also fortunately happened that the French ship Venus, just before her capture, had fallen in with an English storeship, out of which she had removed the cargo. Thus a little dockyard was found stowed away in the hold of the prize.

At all times the regular army on shore appear to delight in nothing more than working in companionship with their brethren of the blue jacket afloat; but upon this particular occasion, when the safety, honour, and welfare of the whole squadron, and of a pretty large army to boot, to say nothing of the reputation of the country, were all at stake, the land soldiers worked on board the ships with a degree of vigour and effect, which excited the perfect admiration of the sailors.

In the course of a few weeks, as if by magic, (and the influence of such a mind as Rowley's falls little short of the magician's touch,) all four frigates were fitted for sea, and again ready for action, re-masted, re-equipped, and re-manned; when, to their great joy, Admiral Bertie, in H.M.S. Nisus, arrived from the Cape.

As the seas round the Isle of France were now speedily swept clear of the French squadron, the way was kept open for the invading forces, and the fleet of transports from India reached the island on the 21st of November. On the 29th a landing was effected; and on the 3d of December, 1810, the Isle of France was surrendered to His Britannic Majesty's arms.

Thus, within three months and ten days from the period when the British squadron were all but annihilated, not only was the island taken, but every one of the French ships likewise. These consisted of six large frigates, three smaller ships of war, five gun-boats, three captured Indiamen, and twenty-eight merchant vessels, besides an immense quantity of stores and valuable goods on shore.

When we consider upon how nice a point, at one critical moment, the whole success or discomfiture of this important public service depended, we cannot give too much praise to the accomplished warrior, to the agency of whose master-spirit alone upon that occasion the country stands so much indebted. Captain Rowley was made a baronet shortly afterwards; but no honours, however thickly showered on such a man, could adequately repay these obligations. His truest reward, perhaps, lies in the universal applause of his own professional brethren, who, as they are acquainted with all the details of his exploits, and familiar with their difficulties, are probably the best judges of his merit. Still, if the incidents above related had not taken place at so great a distance from home, the renown of Sir Josias Rowley would assuredly have proved not less general in the country at large than it is, and ever must remain, in the Navy. It would indeed be difficult to point out in the whole compass of the naval service an example more practically useful of what may be effected by one man, who not only knows his duty himself, and brings his entire heart and soul to bear upon its faithful performance, but who has learned how to secure the co-operation of every one about him. Can there, in short, be higher praise, or any reward which a right-minded officer should more earnestly desire to secure than is contained in the following passage of the official report of these proceedings?

"A momentary superiority," writes Admiral Bertie, "had been obtained by the enemy, but it was promptly and decisively crushed by the united zeal, judgment, perseverance, skill, and intrepidity of CAPTAIN JOSIAS ROWLEY, the value and importance of whose services, long, conspicuous, and distinguished as they have been, fully justified his being selected as the senior officer conducting the blockade of the Isle of France. In the present instance," continues the commander-in-chief, in his glowing despatch to the Admiralty, "Captain Rowley, almost alone and unsupported, but by the never-failing energies and resources of his active and intelligent mind, under circumstances, as may easily be imagined, of extreme anxiety, mortification, and diappointment, in a few hours not only retook two of His Majesty's ships, but captured, also, the largest frigate possessed by the enemy in those seas, and thus restored the British naval pre-eminence in that quarter, which his talents had so long successfully contributed to maintain."

In 1833, His late Majesty's Government, in consideration of the high claims which Sir Josias Rowley (now an Admiral in the service) had upon the country, and knowing that a more prudent or sagacious officer could not be selected from the list, nominated him to the delicate and difficult command of the Mediterranean fleet. It would be unsuitable for me to say more on this occasion, and indeed it would not be easy to say more, than that the high reputation which he won in time of war was fully sustained in the less brilliant, but often more arduous, services of peace.

END OF THE SECOND SERIES OF FRAGMENTS.

FRAGMENTS

OF

VOYAGES AND TRAVELS.

THIRD SERIES.

ADVERTISEMENT.

I HAVE thought it right, in reprinting this series of Fragments of my Voyages and Travels, to retain the original Dedication to His Royal Highness Prince George of Cumberland, now Crown Prince of Hanover, for two reasons—First, because I feel anxious to renew the offer of my humble duty to that amiable and accomplished Prince. In the next place, I think it useful to retain the Dedication in question, as it helps to explain the nature and objects of the following work. At the time it was written (1833) the subject of Indian affairs occupied an unusual share of public attention, and I wished to say what I could to elucidate so intricate a topic.

I am well aware, however, that many portions of any work written about the East, must, even in the short period of seven years, materially change their character, and their degree of interest. Nevertheless, as my purpose was more to deal with the general principles upon which our Indian Empire is based, than to describe passing events; and as almost all the illustrations are as well suited to one date as to another; and as, finally, it would have required the whole work to be re-cast to fit it to the present time, I have refrained from making any essential changes in the text.

A few explanatory notes, however, have been added, still further to explain matters, or to re-adjust some circumstances which time had put out of place.

These remarks, it will be observed, apply only to the Chapters from I. to IX. The other parts of this volume, which consist chiefly of professional narratives and of various nautical operations, stand just as they were originally printed—for however imperfect I know them to be, I feel very unwilling to touch anything which has already been so kindly received by the public.

Portsmouth,

8th August, 1840.

TO

His Royal Highness

PRINCE GEORGE OF CUMBERLAND.

—•—

Sir,

The flattering notice your Royal Highness was pleased to confer upon the early parts of this little work, has encouraged me to continue it, and prompted me to solicit permission to dedicate the whole to your Royal Highness.

In these concluding volumes* I have endeavoured to adapt both the topics themselves, and the terms in which they are expressed, to the more advanced age and experience of the persons for whose use chiefly the design was originally conceived.

It occurred to me, that it might be advantageous, particularly at this juncture, to render the great question of the East India Company's government, if possible, less complicated and unintelligible to young readers than it has heretofore been considered. I also hoped, that, if this task could be accomplished in connexion with lighter matters, and within any reasonable compass, the intrinsic importance and variety of the subject might lend it an interest which, I well knew from personal examination on the spot, essentially belonged to it, though too rarely participated by persons at a distance.

My first intention, accordingly, was to have combined, incidentally with a narrative of the various voyages and travels which I made in the East, such remarks on the administration of the Company as might help to elucidate the intricate nature of the subsisting relations between the British nation and the inhabitants of Hindustan.

I soon found, however, that this plan would lead to much confusion, and that it was necessary, in order to afford the subject the best chance of being understood, not merely to arrange these materials separately, but greatly to condense them; and, instead of attempting to exhaust, or even to touch upon everything, to advert to those points alone which, upon the whole, appeared most likely to leave correct general impressions.

In this spirit, I have confined my observations on India to the first portion, in which is contained a brief account of the rise, progress, and present state of the East India Company, together with such details as seem calculated to illustrate the proceedings of our distant fellow-countrymen, in war, in peace, and in diplomatic arrangements with the native powers.

In the second portion are given sketches of some of the numerous excursions I made in the Eastern islands and on the continent of India.

The third portion is devoted almost exclusively to those nautical topics in which I have observed people on shore take the greatest interest; and in the consideration of which the rising generation afloat may, perhaps, find their account.

My chief purpose, however, will be answered, if these volumes prove acceptable to your Royal Highness, or instructive, or entertaining to young persons in any walk of life.

I have the honour to remain

Your Royal Highness's

Most obedient and most humble Servant,

BASIL HALL.

London, 20th April, 1833.

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* The former editions of these Fragments consisted of three volumes in each series.

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FRAGMENTS

OF

VOYAGES AND TRAVELS.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION—BEING A POPULAR SKETCH OF THE PRINCIPLES UPON WHICH THE ENGLISH EMPIRE IN INDIA IS FOUNDED.

NOTWITHSTANDING the proverbial charm of novelty, it is difficult for us at once to take much sincere interest in any place or circumstance respecting which we have previously known little or nothing; and probably for this reason it too often happens, that characters of the highest order of human intellect remain for ever unappreciated, and many enterprises of great pith and moment pass away without notice at all commensurate to their curiosity and importance. Such is peculiarly the case when, from the field on which the incidents have displayed themselves lying far off, we have never acquired any distinct conception of their relation to home scenes familiar to us all from infancy.

In my multifarious perambulations over the world, I have seen no country to which this remark might be applied with so much propriety as to India, nor any one which stood so greatly in need of a popular historian to do justice to its high and varied merits. Yet I almost fear no writer of this description will soon be tempted to come forward, nor do I think he would be likely to meet with adequate attention if he ventured to try the experiment. There may be found, indeed, a set of curious inquirers and book-devourers, who will swallow anything about the East, from a work in two massy quartos on the Rajpoots, to a leash of duodecimos on the life and adventures of a Persian barber. Generally speaking, however, grown-up persons who have been in the habit of hearing all their lives of Indian matters without ever clearly comprehending them, will hardly be prevailed upon to risk a repetition of their former ennui, by engaging afresh in such a wide research, or tempted to trust themselves on such a huge and seemingly trackless desert of dry history. Most people, in short, will be content to go on to the last with the vague and unsatisfactory conceptions which accident, and the occasional long prosations of old Indians, have impressed upon their unwilling attention.

With young persons there appears somewhat more hope; for they have not yet become embarrassed with the complexity, nor frightened with the extent of this topic, while they may probably be interested in the East from recent familiarity with the Arabian Nights, or with the still more striking and graphic scenery and illustrations of Oriental manners referred to in almost every page of the sacred writings. The rising generation may therefore be rather predisposed to enter upon the inquiry, than actually disinclined, like most of their seniors, to listen to it at all. To these, or to any other willing readers, I think it might not be difficult to impart a certain degree of useful and agreeable interest about India by a simple statement of the rise, progress, and present state of our enormous Empire in that quarter of the world, accompanied by occasional illustrative explanations of the principles by which it is held together. Such a view would of course include a sketch of the means by which those vast regions have already been won, and are now retained in subjection. It might also be allowable to relieve these details by some description of the English society, and their occupations in a country so far from home and so entirely dissimilar from our own in climate, scenery, manners, and, generally speaking, in almost all the public duties, as well as many of the ordinary relations of private life.

If by any means this purpose could be accomplished, and the topic rescued from its complexity and pressure, even in a slight degree, the rising generation of readers at least might possibly be inspired, early enough in life, with as hearty a relish for Indian information, as they take in that which relates to European countries. It might then not unreasonably be expected, that as they grew in years, and acquired more extensive means of obtaining knowledge, they would become more competent to turn new information to account, as arose gradually before them, in the advanced stages of the inquiry. If this could be brought about, and our relations with the Eastern world made less crabbed and difficult of comprehension, a subject heretofore notoriously uninteresting might in time gain favour with the public. This result would manifestly prove advantageous to every one of the

various parties concerned. In the first place, it would surely be to the advantage of the British Empire at large, of which India now forms an extensive integral portion, for the community at home to be made better aware of the sources of their power in those distant regions. Again, this knowledge would not be less beneficial in the end to the natives of the East themselves, whose welfare is so essentially bound up with our good government of their affairs. Nor will it be denied that such familiarity with this subject, on the part of the public, might be useful, as well as satisfactory, to the East India Company, whose wisest and most beneficent acts are now so often grievously and wantonly misrepresented. Finally, the general diffusion of the information alluded to would, I am certain, be directly conducive to the advancement of the national reputation of England, for good faith and fair dealing, all over the world. This last consideration seems the most important of any; since to such example, in all probability, more than to any other circumstance, the great joint cause of virtue and genuine freedom is indebted for its permanent existence not only at home, but in every other country where popular institutions are known.

"The situation of a dependent state, with a population of fifty millions, at a distance of ten thousand miles from the principal state, and surrounded by governments without faith, or even long-sighted prudence, is unparalleled in the history of the world; and the application of the common maxims of political morality to the management of such a dependence, is, from the very singularity of the case, likely to require much caution, and to be subject to considerable mistake."

These are the words of the late Sir John Malcolm, one of the ablest authors who has attempted to render the subject of India popular and intelligible to distant readers. I say attempted, because, with all his powers, and the unequalled extent of his personal knowledge, I am afraid that even he has not altogether succeeded in rendering his favourite topic as popular as it well deserves to be. But unless that difficult service can be accomplished, there is little chance of India being ever duly attended to. This, surely, is much to be wondered at; for, undoubtedly, in the whole circle of political history or philosophy, there occurs hardly any phenomenon which strikes the imagination with more surprise, or which seems more calculated to arrest attention, than the existence of such a prodigious extent of national power, exercised so far from the mother country. Unfortunately, too, the mystery of our Indian rule does not lie within range of ordinary explanation; for it differs in some of its most material points from every system of public polity which has gone before it, in that or any other quarter of the globe; while it bears no resemblance to anything at present existing elsewhere. The peculiarly insulated nature of this subject, therefore, added to the remoteness, and its vast extent, variety, and endless complication, almost necessarily render the topic irksome to a great majority even of those persons who take delight in the history of other countries. If it be difficult to obtain accurate geographical or geological knowledge of any distant place without actually visiting it, there is immeasurably more difficulty in gaining a correct insight into the moral and political state of remote regions without also bestowing upon them the advantage of a personal examination. In the case of European states, this is comparatively easy; but with respect to India, a visit is so totally out of the question in most instances, that, generally speaking, people give up the inquiry in despair, and even turn with something akin to disgust from a subject which if they could only be brought to look upon it with the favour it deserves, they would, I verily believe, discover to be fraught with the deepest possible interest.

The difficulties which beset the task of rendering India an intelligible and attractive topic are so very great, that I should never have dreamed of attempting such an undertaking, had it not occurred to me, during the course of a long and patient examination of the subject, both on the spot itself and elsewhere, and through many varied channels of study and conversation, that the theory of our Eastern power, complicated though it may seem, is, in fact, not only simple and satisfactory, but one which is capable of distinct and popular explanation. Neither, I believe, is it necessary to the acquisition of a clear and general apprehension of the whole question, that any oppressive number of its details should be studied, or many troublesome technicalities investigated. On the contrary, I have generally found that all which is necessary to carry us pleasantly forward in these Oriental researches, is a certain degree of reliance on the fidelity of the authorities consulted, and the application of ordinary reasoning to the results so obtained. This, in effect, is neither more nor less than what the generality of mankind are compelled to do in the case, for example, of Astronomy, or any other exalted science. It is obvious, that not one person out of ten thousand who implicitly adopt the Newtonian theory of gravitation, is capable of demonstrating the truth of that law; and yet its universality of application is fully admitted and blindly acted upon, though the reasonings upon which it rests are not more demonstrably solid than the theoretical principles which, I conceive, will easily account for most of the political and moral phenomena, and likewise many of the apparent anomalies, of our Eastern empire. At the same time, hardly any writer would be guiltless of presumption if he were not to confess himself deeply sensible of the difficulty, and, I may add, extreme delicacy of this undertaking. Other men, indeed, may well be distrustful of themselves when they find such an authority as Sir John Malcolm writing in the following strain on this subject, after upwards of twenty-five years' residence in the country.

"The reflections which it is meant to offer upon the political, civil, and military government of British India, are submitted with a deference which proceeds equally from a want of complete knowledge of some parts of the subject, and a sense of its general magnitude and importance. The considerations alluded to are, indeed, of themselves, of so large and complicated a nature, that no person can expect to treat them without falling into frequent error: but the apprehension of this danger is not sufficient to deter me from contributing as much as I can to the elucidation of questions of such vast national importance; and the character of the object which I have in view will, I trust, plead for any failure in its accomplishment."—

Sketch of the Political History of India, p. 144 ; printed in 1811.

If such were the feelings of an accomplished and experienced statesman, after having passed a quarter of a century in situations of the highest activity, and the very best possible for understanding the subject, it might seem quite idle for a mere incidental traveller to hope that he can throw any additional light on a topic which has proved almost too hard for authorities possessing advantages in most respects so greatly superior to his own. It is not impossible, however, that, along with the disadvantages necessarily attendant upon a transient view of any such question, there may be found compensations arising out of the extent and variety of the field of observation, which, if they do not pretend to equal utility, practically speaking, in the way of actual and local business, may yet have their importance in helping us to grasp a larger portion of the subject at one view. Thus, perhaps, anomalies, which have been found almost unintelligible when viewed too closely, may be explained by a sort of generalising process not unlike that of looking over a map, or surveying a set of distant objects from a commanding height.

During the course of nearly four years of an active professional round of duties on the Indian station, accidental circumstances put it in my power to travel twice across the peninsula of Hindustan, from Madras to Bombay, and thus to see much of the interior of the country. In the same period I repeatedly visited both the western or Malabar coast, and the eastern or Coromandel side of the peninsula. I was four or five times at the island of Ceylon, and passed through most of the straits, and touched at many of the islands of the great eastern Archipelago. I also coasted for some hundreds of miles along the continent of China, very nearly to the point where the great wall joins the Yellow Sea. In the course of these extensive voyages and travels, opportunities were afforded over and over again, of bringing into immediate comparison many different parts of this enormous question, and of discovering innumerable discordances and resemblances altogether unexpected before.

For example, nothing can be conceived more dissimilar than the manners and customs of the Indians and Chinese. The Hindoos are such complete slaves of superstitious observances, that they can neither eat, drink, sleep, nor perform any duty, without some absurd and idolatrous form. The Chinese, on the other hand, possess scarcely a trace of religious principle, practice, or sentiment. Again, while the occupations of the English in India are of the most stirring and important nature, scattering them over a wide continent, and loading them with the weighty responsibilities of governing large provinces, their countrymen resident at Canton are confined to a few jealously-watched acres, and their duties to the management of commercial concerns in one exclusive department. The Spaniards, in like manner, whom I saw at Manilla, are as different as possible in all their habits from the Dutch at Batavia ; while the Malays and Cingalese differ in many important points from the Javanese and Sumatrans. Now, the effects produced on the human character and on the institutions of civil society by these contrasted situations, though extremely curious and instructive, can be fully understood, as I apprehend, only by those who have repeated opportunities of seeing and comparing them together on the spot, and bringing them almost into juxta-position. It seems also quite possible that a considerable portion of these, and a thousand other circumstances, may be little, if at all, known to persons whose duties have fixed them during half their lives to one particular spot, and to one class of duties ; for their observation, however extensive, is still inevitably limited to one particular range, and thus varied comparisons are rendered impossible.

Under this course of immediate and rapid examination, I am free to confess that I found my opinions liable to such frequent changes, that at times I almost feared no safe conclusion could ever be come to, nor any general explanation given of the principles which maintained in secure action a political machine of such magnitude and complexity as our Indian government. And perhaps, if I had remained permanently in those regions, so that my observation might have been confined to Oriental topics alone, the confusion, instead of clearing itself up, might only have become worse confounded. The same train of fortunate accidents, however, which had given me opportunites of examining almost every part of the coasts of Asia, and a considerable portion of the interior, have since enabled me to visit many other parts of the world, under circumstances generally so favourable, that they are calculated, as I think, to throw back useful light on many of the scenes previously witnessed in the East.

Every one whose fortune it has been to travel much, will remember that, in proportion as his field of view has been extended and diversified, he has become conscious of important modifications both in his opinions and in his feelings with respect to the countries first passed over. If he revisits the same regions, after the lapse of a few years, he will often be astonished at the different aspect which almost everything then wears from what it had seemed originally in his eyes ; and a good deal of experience may be required to satisfy him that it is not the things themselves which have changed, but that the difference lies in his own altered habits of thought and feeling, and in the more practised powers of perception of his own mind. Supposing this sort of experiment to be tried over and over again, and that on each occasion a new set of countries are brought into comparison with those first visited, fresh instruction ought to be imparted upon every return. The judgment, it is fair to suppose, will thus be chastised, and taught to exercise modesty in its decisions on points where the information is scanty ; while, on the other hand, it may be enabled to pronounce confidently an opinion upon circumstances which have stood the test of frequent observation.

It is not always so ruled, however, by the critics ; for if, unfortunately for the poor wight of a traveller, his account, be it ever so well grounded on personal experience, does not happen to square pretty nearly with the preconceived notions or wishes of his reader, who up to that time, we shall suppose, is ignorant of the facts of the case—all those very circumstances which, in fairness, ought to entitle the narrator to a fair hearing, are actually arrayed against him as valid reasons for not trusting to his account ! Such people forget that there

are two kinds of prejudice in the world—one of knowledge, the other of ignorance ; and that while one person may judge wrong even after he has enjoyed ample opportunities of forming a correct opinion on the spot, another may possibly err quite as far by forming his judgment upon pure guess-work in his closet. Neither is it an uncommon case for readers to apply, insensibly, the circumstances by which they are surrounded in their own country, and with which they are already familiar, to explain things which are remote and unseen, and of which their knowledge, being drawn from scanty, conflicting, and uncertain authorities, must of necessity be very imperfect.

A well-known and most industrious writer upon Indian topics, but who has never been in that country, goes the length of gravely maintaining that more may be learned of India in one year at home, than during the longest life in the country itself ! This moderate paradox very happily illustrates the position alluded to above, that there are two kinds of prejudice in the world.

" Whatever is worth seeing or hearing in India," says he, " can be expressed in writing. As soon as everything of importance is expressed in writing, a man who is duly qualified may obtain more knowledge of India in one year in his closet in England, than he could obtain during the course of the longest life, by the use of his eyes and ears in India."—*Mill's History of India, Preface*, p. xii.

Now, surely this supposes that the traveller, or any other inquirer on the spot, is to do nothing more than bring his eyes and ears to bear on the objects surrounding him. Why should he not read or otherwise inquire into these matters, in their widest sense, while in India, as well as in his closet in England ? Or, I may ask, why may not he combine the actual observation on the spot with subsequent closet study at home ?

Sir John Malcolm, in one of his books, puts this distinction exactly on the opposite tack, and I think neatly enough.

" The author," he remarks, " will probably be charged with Indian prejudices ; and as he does not pretend to any exemption from the common frailties of human nature, he willingly admits that he must be prepossessed in favour of measures which he has contributed to carry into execution. The merely English reader, however," continues this able historian, " will do well to recollect that there are also English prejudices ; and that those who never saw a country so distant as India, and so unlike anything in Europe, must acknowledge at least one great inferiority in such discussions."

It would be very unprofitable, however, to pursue these conflicting speculations ; for, in the treatment of any subject that can be named, especially if it be one which engages much of the public attention,—and, still more, if it be one highly exciting in itself,—there must arise differences of opinion, which will always be described as prejudices by those of the contrary way of thinking. As this consequence is quite inevitable, the only safe point to aim at is the fair and explicit exposition of the final result left on the writer's mind by the whole course of his observations and reflections, without his pledging himself to any party or theory, or indeed to anything but sincerity.

We are never sure, beforehand, what direction prejudices are to take, nor what opinions any given individual may be expected to maintain. I remember, for example, once hearing a learned native of Hindustan remark, that if any two of his countrymen—not to say two states—could be found, who at all times and under all circumstances might entirely depend upon each other, the British power in India would soon be at an end. On being pressed to expand his engima a little further, he said—The essential difference between you English and us natives consists chiefly in this particular, that while all of you have implicit confidence in one another, and can reckon upon every one of your respective movements being regulated by the strictest maxims of good faith, we, alas ! possess no such bond of union as a rule of our lives. You act over the whole of this vast empire, as it appears to me, permanently, from a sense of duty, not merely because it seems to be your interest at the moment, but on principle, and simply because it is right. We, too, said he, certainly act, in the main, honestly ; but we do so because we have learned that such a course is for our advantage. We have our proverb as well as you about honesty and policy, which we say are " twins that are born, live, and die together." But, unfortunately for us Asiatics, whenever the temptation to err happens to be pretty strong, the unsubstantial nature of our motives becomes apparent, and straightway the whole of our moral structure falls to pieces, from the want of the cementing principle of good faith, by which your conduct is regulated. The enormous superiority of physical force on the side of the natives sinks absolutely into nothing, when opposed to this moral strength which you bring into the field, and may continue to exert as long as you please. It unites all of you in body and soul, indissolubly, while it imparts to the whole of your numbers collectively the same decision of purpose and uniformity of action, which belong, amongst us, only to rare individuals. The spirit of truth and the refinements of the point of honour, which you cherish on their own account, seem to pervade all your classes alike, and thus your leaders are enabled to communicate the impulses of their master-minds to the youngest as well as to the oldest and most experienced man amongst you, and with equal facility and confidence at a distance as when close at hand ! With us it is totally different. Our military leaders do indeed often exercise a wonderful sway over the minds of those soldiers who are immediately under their eye, and they can put large bodies in motion with considerable effect. But none of these men are to be trusted at a distance ; for, as I said before, we are altogether without that confident power by which the English not only convey their wishes to one another, but at the same time secure the most hearty co-operation through good report and evil report—in disaster as well as in success—in danger, in difficulty, in temptation. The only question with you appears to be " What is our duty ?" and that once ascertained, the point is pursued at all hazards, be the personal consequences what they may. If an Englishman at Delhi engages to meet another from Cape Comorin on such a day on the banks of the Kistna, the promise is sure to be kept, whatever intervening circumstances arise to render it the apparent interest of either or both to depart from the engagement. And what

holds good amongst, you to the smallest trifle, is equally so in the most important affairs, and in every one of the multifarious ramifications of your complicated administration.

What, for example—continued the energetic old gentleman—what is it which enables our young friend, the collector of this district, to exercise such prodigious, such undisputed, almost despotic sway over the half million of inhabitants whose affairs he regulates, and from whom he draws for his government so large a revenue? It is certainly not to the petty body-guard of twenty or thirty Sepoys that he is indebted for his authority, nor to the influence of fear of any kind, for there is no appeal to military force within several hundreds of miles; and yet our friend's power is, for all the purposes of good government, as efficient, if not much more so, than ever was enjoyed by the mere military possessors of this often-conquered country. It is not owing to the inherent strength of his great talents, nor even to his unblemished personal character; but mainly, if not entirely, to that pervading principle of resolute integrity, acting at once as a duty and a sentiment, and forming an indissoluble part of the system of that body politic to which he belongs, that his influence is due. If the gentleman alluded to were removed to-morrow, it would be just the same with his successor. We might not, indeed, be so fortunate as to possess over us a man of so much ability or industry as our present resident, but we should be certain of his being equally conscientious, and as completely beyond the reach of any conceivable corruption. In fact, the slightest shadow of suspicion falling on his good name would at once and irretrievably ruin his fortunes, by depriving him of all power to carry on the duties of his station; his place would speedily be filled up by some other person in whom the government had more confidence.

What renders all this more striking as a matter of philosophical speculation, continued our learned Pundit, and more instructive as a matter of practical utility, is the curious fact of its being placed in such mortifying contrast with what generally takes place when we are left to our own native devices. The very persons over whom your residents, collectors, judges, and magistrates, or military commanders, exercise so complete an ascendency, possess in themselves, in a very slight degree, those moral qualities to the influence of which they submit without the smallest distrust. We know well enough how to appreciate virtue in those whom we have learned from experience to confide in; but the misfortune is, we cannot get up amongst ourselves either the same principles of action or the same confidence.

We have, I fear, concluded the old gentleman, little or no true patriotism amongst us; for we are all lamentably indifferent about our countrymen, unless they happen to be of the same caste—every other class we disregard—so much so, that, after all, it is perhaps to this fatal and most deteriorating institution that the universal want of national sympathy in the East may be traced.

My worthy Hindoo friend may be supposed, in the heat of discussion, to have pressed the point rather too hard against his countrymen, as people are so apt to do when anxiously bent on illustrating their opinions: but in most of his views we may go along with him. I think, too, it may be shown that the principle alluded to carries its application into every branch, great and small, of the extensive scheme of policy which has led to such wonderful results. In fact, this remark may be generalised without limit; for an examination of the various systems in operation throughout the world will satisfy us, that there is no rule of good government except that golden one pointed out by my Indian friend; and that the prosperity of no state can be long secured where the principle of good faith, national and individual, is not *the* mainspring of action in the governors, and reciprocally in the governed.

The following short extract from one of the Duke of Wellington's Indian Dispatches is not only distinguished by the copious vigour of its style, but by the matchless force with which, in every good cause, this wonderful man wields his weapons. Many other passages no less pregnant with useful instruction on these topics might readily be selected from the same source, but I content myself with one which contributes so directly to substantiate all I have said on the important secret of our Indian power.

"In respect to the policy of the question, it is fully canvassed in the enclosed letter. I would sacrifice Gwalior, or every frontier of India, ten times over, in order to preserve our credit for scrupulous good faith, and the advantages and honour we gained by the late war and the peace; and we must not fritter them away in arguments drawn from overstrained principles of the laws of nations, which are not understood in this country. What brought me through many difficulties in the war, and the negotiations for peace? the British good faith, and nothing else."*

At all events, be these speculations as they may, it must be more or less instructive to show in what way this point in the national character of England has been gradually brought into practical exercise in India, from its early and partial application, up to its fullest employment at the present hour. In such a review we shall readily discover how far our hold of that vast country, in times to come, is dependent upon the pure and vigorous maintenance of the integrity and good faith which have won it. For it will, I think, be clearly seen, by any one who studies the subject closely, that whenever, in past times, we have lost any political, commercial, or other advantages in the East, that failure may be traced to some relinquishment of the severe simplicity of the rule which places the qualities alluded to at the top of the list of our moral duties. In like manner, it may be asserted that our success of every kind, either with reference to our own national credit or to the happiness of the natives, owes not only its origin, but its present existence, to the same causes. If this be true, it follows, that our future authority in the East will be measured by the same scale. It cannot, therefore, be otherwise than important to investigate the nature of those principles upon which so much depends, and through which, though at the distance of half the circuit of the globe from the mother country, the influence of English minds and manners, and of English feelings, is felt in the daily transactions of nearly ninety millions of persons, constituting

* Extracted from the Despatch of the Duke of Wellington, dated Bombay, 17th of March, 1804.— Gurwood, vol. iii. page 168, Second Edition.

the populatton of British India, and of the allied or protected states.

It would, no doubt, form a still more valuable and interesting object of inquiry, to ascertain the original causes which gave purity to the fountain-head or source from whence those principles flow which, even so far from home, can produce effects so marvellous. But that topic is too sacred and copious for transient discussion; and I shall merely remark in passing, that the connexion between the Christian character, and honestly-won prosperity of the parent state, and that of its Eastern empire, are so close and so inseparable, that anything which tarnishes the national reputation at home, or essentially diminishes its prescriptive attribute of good faith, must be felt instantly, and probably with tenfold disaster and disgrace, abroad. This applies especially to a country where almost all political authority rests upon opinion, and where any one act which weakens that support must necessarily threaten to bring the whole stupendous fabric to the ground.

The East India Company began to rise into political power and importance at the beginning of the seventeenth century, when, the great Akbar having gone off the field, the different princes of India became engaged in wars amongst themselves, so interminable and extensive, that almost every province either sunk under the grinding despotism of domestic rule, or was laid waste by the perpetual transit of contending armies. In this state of things, when neither life nor property was secure for an instant, and all hopes of peace were banished from the land, it is not to be wondered at, that the wretched inhabitants hailed with joy the gradual rise of a government which not only promised them peace, but secured to them the observance of their ancient religion and manners, and gave them hopes of a durable tranquillity far beyond what they had ever enjoyed before, either under their own monarchs or under the wild domination of their various conquerors. The Hindoos had long been lost to all, or nearly to all, feeling of national pride, from the frequency and variety of these conquests; and it was not unnatural that they should consider the very permanency of usurpation as a blessing, or that they should forget their prejudices against their European masters, in a contemplation of that superior regard to justice and civilisation, by which, even in those early times, they saw their rulers more or less accompanied. It appears, that in the first stages of our Eastern power, these feelings were so generally shared by all ranks, that even the princes and chiefs of the country assisted in our establishment. But, after a time, the leading men amongst the natives, whose authority was necessarily abridged in proportion to the rise of the Company, came to see too late, that in seeking to secure tranquillity for their country, they had allowed a power to gain head which they could never shake, but, on the contrary, which actually extended and confirmed its authority by those very efforts which were made to subvert its influence. Success gave the European adventurers an obvious advantage; but what puzzled the natives beyond measure, was the manner in which these wonderful strangers, instead of being injured by reverses, only rose higher and higher from every misfortune. They could not conceive whence those apparently unbounded resources were drawn, by which fresh vigour was still imparted to the arms of their conquerors. "I am not alarmed," said the famous Hyder Ali, "at what I see of the strength and resources of the Company, but at what is unseen." This observation, made nearly a couple of centuries after the first establishment of the English in India, represents faithfully the impression made upon those ignorant nations by the interference of a state drawing support from a country with which they were entirely unacquainted, and of whose power they were able to judge only by its effects.

It is useful, in considering these questions, to bear in mind the truth of the old maxim, "omne ignotum pro magnifico," for in all mystery there is a tendency to exaggeration. But although this exaggeration may serve a particular purpose for a time, there may, and, indeed, in the nature of things there must, arrive a period of reaction, when the advantages gained by the indistinctness and extravagance of the first view will be more than counterbalanced by the loss consequent upon detection. If, then, in the pride of power, we forget the essential means by which our success has been acquired, and hitherto preserved—or if we imagine that any panic or national submission can be rendered durable, or any deception permanently maintained to useful purpose, we shall surely find ourselves mistaken. Still more grievously shall we deceive ourselves, if we expect that those unseen resources for the possession of which we may at any time obtain credit amongst the natives, but which we do not really possess, will be made available for the purposes of real service in the hour of trial. Under no combination of events, indeed, public or private, can any man permanently hold his ground supported by false pretences; and however much adventitious circumstances may give individuals, or even nations, the ascendency at first, the time must inevitably arrive when, if they do not honestly profit by experience, and in all sincerity seek to gain their point by rendering it the interest of those with whom they act to co-operate heartily, they must in the end be themselves subdued. These maxims, though so obvious upon after reflection, were but too often neglected in the course of our early Indian administration. Thus we often trusted, with a rash confidence, to means almost evanescent, while we neglected collateral assistance of eminent efficiency towards the establishment of our permanent authority, At certain seasons, again, when our affairs fell into the hands of weak men, we were guilty of the opposite error, and acted with an absurd degree of subserviency to the native powers: so much so, that in a spirit of very unwise humility, we occasionally pursued a policy calculated to discourage or disgust our friends, while it animated the hopes of our enemies. What, however, was worst of all, this vacillating, timorous, or selfish policy, invariably lessened us in our own esteem; and thus, by casting a doubt on the integrity of our purposes in our own breasts, weakened the confidence which ever belongs to the consciousness of possessing a good cause.

Between these two extremes of overweening confidence and arrogance on the one hand, and real or affected humility on the other, there lies a just mean which we must follow, if we desire that our empire in India shall be durable or useful either to the natives or to ourselves. But it is

not very easy to hit this point in the government of nations, any more than it is always easy to act right in the business of private life. Mere good intentions and honest industry will not suffice in either case; but precisely as the scale of our operations is extended, so the ascendency of talents, and knowledge, and true public spirit, comes to be felt. There is this grand distinction, however, between domestic and political affairs. In private life, a virtuous, but moderately gifted person, acting from a sense of duty, will rarely do much mischief; but in the government of extensive countries, a well-intentioned blockhead may often bring the severest misery upon the heads of those whom it is his purpose to benefit; and it is but a poor satisfaction to know that his intentions were the best in the world, and that his own character and fortunes are involved in the national wreck. Unhappily, there are but too many instances on record in the East to illustrate this position; but their occurrence only tends to confirm the doctrine, that the truest economy will ever be found in employing, at whatever cost, men of the highest capacity we can procure. Good intentions are a cheap commodity; talents—especially talents combined with public spirit and experience—very rare; and they are always in such demand, that no market is overstocked with this supply. But whether we have to deal with the gigantic powers of Hastings or Wellesley, or with the creeping, temporising intellects of Mr. A., Mr. B., or Mr. C., it will be of material consequence, that in seasons of doubt and danger even these men should be constrained to resort to some general and well-established maxims of government, in order to rescue the vessel of the state from her difficulties. In seamanship, a thorough-bred sailor, though not a man of talent, may often manage to work his ship off a lee-shore, by merely adhering to established rules of which he neither understands nor is capable of understanding the principles; but it is only the highly-gifted officer, who, adding to his experience the lights of science, can successfully cope, in the long-run, with the dangers and difficulties of his profession.

It formed a part of my original intention to have endeavoured to point out in what those maxims of government consisted, which have proved so wonderfully effectual in the establishment of our empire in the East Indies. This seemed the more likely to be useful, as it struck me that by no other means could our authority in that country be maintained for any length of time, or be rendered profitable either to ourselves or to the natives. But having very soon found the task grow much too large, as well as too difficult for me, I have been led to imagine I may stand a better chance of doing justice to the subject, by adopting the humbler and less regular expedient of touching lightly and in a transient way upon a few of the leading and more characteristic of those points in Oriental history, wars, politics, and manners, which refer to British India alone, and to the English residents in that country. In this way, opportunities, it is thought, may be afforded for introducing, amongst lighter matters, many incidental explanations and occasional remarks, calculated to illustrate subjects generally considered obscure, though not involving anything essentially difficult or complex.

It may be observed, that although fixed rules cannot possibly be laid down for the regulation of affairs liable to such perpetual variation as those of India, still as the fundamental principles of morality, like the mathematical laws of the physical world, are really immutable, no combination of adverse or of fortunate circumstances can justify a breach of political honesty. Yet there may reasonably be allowed a considerable degree of elasticity in the actual administration of Indian affairs, which, however, will be safe and useful, exactly in proportion to the universality and rigour of that good faith which sets it in motion. Many people vainly suppose it possible to determine, by legislative enactments in England, what shall be the precise degree and kind of interference which our local governments in India shall exert in their political intercourse with the native powers. But all experience proves, that such detailed instructions either fail totally in practice, or lead rapidly to the defeat of their avowed, and, I believe, sincere object—the welfare of the people of Hindustan. But while this is true, it certainly becomes a matter of real importance to investigate, in the spirit of truth and fair dealing, and also of political courage, the actual state of the fact. By ascertaining which roads lead us away from true improvements, we may have a better chance of discovering those which are practicable, and tend to good results. At all events, it becomes us to look the evils manfully in the face, and honestly seek to redress them; but in so doing, we ought not to refuse credit where credit is due, and, above all, we should try to avoid the folly of sacrificing what has been found beneficial in practice, though perhaps imperfect or anomalous in theory, for the sake of the possible good which speculative changes might bring about.

To understand fully the nature of our Indian government, and to be able to judge correctly of the principles by which it is held together, and may be maintained as long as we please; or to be able to say, with any chance of accuracy, what measures of improvement are most likely to be profitable, would require a course of study of prodigious extent, coupled, as I conceive, with a long series of actual observations on the spot. These conditions unfortunately shut out the greater number of persons whom it is most desirable to influence. For this, however, there appears to be no remedy. Setting aside the insuperable difficulty to most persons, of the voyage and the time required for even a transient visit to countries so remote, what person, save one or two in a thousand, could find leisure or patience to wade through the endless histories of India? Or who could listen without going distracted to an account of all the different regulations by which a revenue of more than twenty millions sterling is collected in as many different provinces? Or hope to comprehend the intricacies of a judicial system by which justice is administered over territories under our rule six times larger and three times more populous than France? It might be a little less difficult perhaps to explain the manner in which nearly two hundred thousand native troops are maintained in our pay, subjected to our discipline, and officered by British gentlemen; but who could expect to follow the reasons which determine the distribution of this vast army? All or any of these items, however, would be found trivial difficulties in this mighty research, in comparison to the gigantic task of

understanding minutely the political relations by which our complicated interests in the East have grown into their present form, and are now interlaced and bound up with those of the native powers. I shall say nothing of the manners and customs of the Hindoos—their language, literature, science, and religion—for it is like attempting to reckon the numbers of the stars to venture into such boundless inquiries, which, after all, are of very questionable interest. Yet, without a pretty exact as well as a pretty extensive acquaintance with most of these things, it is, I fear, well nigh desperate for any man to engage in projects either for the improvement of the natives, or for that of the East India Company's government.

Would to God! however—and I say it with the most heartfelt conviction of its utility and importance to millions upon millions of our fellow-subjects in India—would to God that I could describe, in terms adequately forcible to engage the attention and convince the understanding of those whom it so deeply concerns, the countless advantages which the poor natives of those regions actually enjoy at this moment under the present much-abused system of government. For, while I freely grant that there exist many evils in the system, I believe very few of these are susceptible of much improvement, and assuredly none of sudden or extensive changes for the better. I admit that our legislation is far from complete, that the taxation of the lands we have conquered may in some places press heavily on our Indian subjects; and that the administration of justice, though ten times better than ever it was in times past, is not quite so perfect as it may prove in the Millennium. I admit, too, that the natives of the upper ranks do not enjoy the authority amongst their countrymen which they enjoyed of old, and that amongst them there must necessarily exist some natural feeling of humiliation at witnessing the extension of an authority which has absorbed so much their own importance. Nevertheless, all things considered, I do firmly believe that India is at this moment more tranquil and more prosperous than ever it has been before. I believe, too, that the great mass of the inhabitants of that interesting country enjoy more real, practical freedom than they could hope to possess under their own native rulers, or will enjoy again under any rulers whatever, if we shall incautiously interfere with a system of such enormous complexity and extent.

CHAPTER II.

BRIEF HISTORICAL NOTICE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT EVENTS IN THE RISE OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY'S POWER IN THE EAST.

The celebrated passage to India by the Cape of Good Hope, a route once terrific to mariners, though now as familiar as the British Channel, and far less dangerous, was discovered by the Portuguese in 1497; and although the English endeavoured to share with the discoverers in the advantages of this grand opening for commercial enterprise, more than a hundred years elapsed before they shot a-head of the first bold adventurers, or could even hold any tolerable way with them in their golden race. What was quite unexpected, too, our traders found that the dangers and difficulties of the new navigation were trivial in comparison to those encountered on shore; their individual capital, also, though considerable, made but a poor figure in maintaining expeditions so full of risk and so protracted in their term as Indian voyages then were. Besides which, it soon appeared that associations of merchants who might agree to combine their resources for the purpose of advancing their common object of gain, could have no security against the interference of wealthy competitors, unless protected in their speculations by legislative enactments of their own government, as well as the countenance of the monarchs with whose countries they traded. Queen Elizabeth, therefore, who admitted the sound reasoning of these views, sent an embassy to the Great Mogul Akbar, to solicit his protection in favour of her subjects; and shortly afterwards, without waiting for the emperor's answer, she granted a charter to a body of her merchants, by which, on the last day of the year 1600, they were erected into a corporation, under the title of "The Governor and Company of Merchants of London trading to the East Indies." The original capital possessed by these speculators amounted to only £72,000. Such were the small beginnings of that mighty power which has overspread the richest portion of Asia, and far outrivalled in substantial wealth, real utility, and political influence, the authority of the greatest conquerors of the East! By this charter, the Company were vested with the power of purchasing lands, without any limitation, while their commerce was to be directed by a governor and twenty-four other persons in committee. They were to enjoy, during fifteen years, the privileges of an exclusive trade with Asia, Africa, and the islands of the Indian seas lying beyond the Cape of Bona Esperanza, as it is called in the charter. The Crown retained the right to resume the grant upon giving two years' warning, in the event of its not proving advantageous to the state; while, in the same clause, the Government stood pledged to the Company to prolong the monopoly for other fifteen years, should the scheme turn out productive to the nation. In 1609 the Company obtained a second charter, vesting them with a permanent right of exclusive trade, flanked, as before, by the cautious proviso that the Crown retained the power of resuming the grant, if it was not found to promote the interests of the realm.

The first fleets of the Company succeeded very well; but as their servants in the East were guarded by no forts, and recognised by no treaties, they found themselves not only very ill accommodated, but frequently exposed to insults and all kinds of injuries not only by the cross fire of their European rivals, the Portuguese and Dutch, but by the unsteady faith of the natives, to say nothing of the constant entanglements arising from their own deranged finances and defective discipline. The Great Mogul, indeed, had given the English leave to form settlements on the shores of his empire; but the energetic Portuguese, inflamed with that peculiar hostility which appears in all ages to have characterised questions of commercial interest, or which, in the vulgar tongue, are said to touch the pocket, interposed every kind of obstacle to the peaceable establishment of the intruding English. The Portuguese claim to an exclusive right of

commerce with India, on the ground of original discovery, or "prior possession," as they called it, was first evaded, then derided by their rivals, and finally resisted by main force, as well as by the more obvious and legitimate method of manly rivalry in fair adventure. In 1612 the two powers came into actual contact on the Indian seas; and as the result, on several occasions, proved favourable to the British, a factory at Surat was established by them, under circumstances highly advantageous to their interests. The Company at home were not slow to improve these successes by opening fresh negotiations with the Emperor, or Great Mogul; and they even induced King James to send an embassy to Jehangeer, then residing at Ajmeer. This mission took place in 1614. The Mogul received Sir Thomas Roe, the ambassador, with all distinction; but the essential objects of the mission were almost entirely thwarted by the intrigues of the Portuguese. A confirmation of former grants, however, being obtained, and some minor privileges secured, the ambassador returned by the way of Persia, where he succeeded in opening a new vein of commercial wealth in the Persian Gulf, chiefly through the favour of Shah Abbas, the reigning monarch of that nation.

The opposition of the Portuguese being thus promptly repelled by force on the one hand, and counteracted by negotiation on the other, it served, in the end, only to augment the resources of the English Company, chiefly by stimulating them to more active and decided measures. For a long time, indeed, it seriously embarrassed their finances, a difficulty which was greatly increased by an abortive attempt to share with the Dutch, or deprive them of the lucrative trade of the Spice Islands. In 1617 the English Company's agents obtained possession of two small islands in the Eastern Archipelago, through the friendship of the natives, but they were soon driven off by the Dutch, who attacked them with a superior force The Company contrived, however, to maintain a certain hold of the Spice Islands, until February 1623, when their sturdy rivals, commanded by one Herman Van Speult, determined not only to demolish the English, root and branch, but to execute their purpose in such an impressive manner as to deter all future interlopers from appearing in that quarter. Accordingly, Captain Towerson and nine other English factors, with about as many attendants, were first tortured and then executed. The avowed object of the Dutch being the removal of their commercial rivals at all hazards, these measures were undertaken in the very face of a solemn treaty between the two nations, signed not four years and a half before (17th July, 1619), every article of which the Dutch had already infringed over and over again. They were no doubt encouraged in these proceedings by the tameness with which the English nation had already submitted to numerous insults and injuries inflicted upon their countrymen trading amongst the smaller Spice Islands, especially at Lantore, where the British factory had been forcibly broken up, and the Company's servants put to death. At all events, nothing could possibly be more pusillanimous than the conduct of king James the First's Government on this occasion. The country, indeed, was roused to a high pitch of astonishment, horror, and indignation, at the cruelties of Amboyna; but, strange to say, the trashy disputes between the states of Bohemia and the House of Austria engaged all the attention of the executive, while this violent national injury inflicted upon the English in the Eastern seas—involving a gross breach of a solemn treaty—was left to the feeble management of a company of merchants, hardly established even in that capacity, and nowise competent to engage in such contests.

Thus encouraged by the supineness of their rivals, the Dutch resolved to postpone no longer the completion of their favourite scheme of ferreting the English out of the Spice Islands. A pretext for quarrelling was soon concocted, and torture used to produce the requisite depositions. This was defended upon the sole plea of its being no more than was usual under the Dutch law in cases of treason. It is now perfectly obvious, upon a review of the circumstances connected with this dreadful proceeding, which has acquired in history the name of the Massacre of Amboyna, that the grounds upon which the English factors were arrested, tortured, and executed, must have been altogether improbable, if not absurd and impossible. Even supposing the whole of these allegations true, the course of procedure, and especially the flagitious manner of conducting its details, were not only manifest violations of the fundamental principles of justice, but appear to have been alike contrary to the laws of Holland and to the rights of humanity. The transaction, in short, seems evidently to have had its origin exclusively in the policy which aimed at the total extirpation of the English from that quarter of the Eastern world. In all probability, none of the atrocities eventually committed may have been contemplated in the outset, yet this furnishes little or no excuse, more especially as the Dutch Government at home not only offered no reparation, but within a few months afterwards gave ample corroboration of the unity of purpose between them and their Indian servants, by finally expelling the remaining English from their neighbourhood.

It is not for the purpose of deepening a stain already indelible on the character of another nation, that I have adverted to this celebrated affair, but in order to call attention to one or two attendant circumstances worthy of notice, and calculated to assist us in tracing the causes of subsequent events, immeasurably greater in extent and importance, by which the gigantic affairs of the East India Company were afterwards influenced. It appears almost demonstrable that if, upon the first breach of the treaty of 1619 with the Dutch, the English Government had insisted upon immediate redress, such a check would have been given to the audacity of their rivals abroad, that, instead of exerting all their energies to counteract the spirit of a treaty framed for the express purpose of securing the mutual advantage of the trading companies, the Dutch factors would have found their best interests, as well as their duty, in co-operating with the English. When, however, these persons saw the British Government indifferent, and had no reason to believe that their own rulers were displeased with these measures, but, on the contrary, had good grounds for supposing them much gratified therewith, it was altogether

too much to expect that the local authorities, in so distant a region, should stop short of the complete accomplishment of their avaricious purpose.

This ought to make us recollect that there are two distinct classes of obligations belonging to what is called good faith, in public transactions: the first consists in not doing anything ourselves contrary to the letter and spirit of an engagement; the second in not permitting others to interfere with its provisions. We ought either not to have formed the treaty of 1619, or we ought to have resisted its flagrant infraction. This is obvious enough; but what is curious and instructive appears to be the effect produced on the public mind in England by the unworthy proceedings of their Government. When, in the first instance, the Dutch destroyed the English settlement at Lantore, the people at home became so excessively indignant, they would cheerfully have submitted to the inevitable privations consequent upon a war, had such an alternative been placed, at that moment, in opposition to the national dishonour. But the resentment of the nation, being left to spend itself in unavailing reproaches, instead of being embodied and directed by their rulers, contributed nothing towards the restoration of the dignity of the country, and the affair terminated in a vain paper war between the Dutch and English companies. These bodies were probably very fit instruments to have settled a question relating to nutmegs and cloves, but they were then unused, and totally incompetent, to discuss great international questions of this sort.

What was the consequence? A positive deterioration of the national feeling of honour, and a diminution of its sense of justice. For when the subsequent atrocities at Amboyna became known, though ten times more horrible than those of Lantore, accompanied by breaches of the treaty of 1619 still more inexcusable and insulting, the people of England, familiarised with the degradation worn so lightly by their pusillanimous rulers, scarcely noticed the cruelties committed upon the persons of their distant fellow-countrymen. The moral of this part of the story it is needless to draw more explicitly than by pointing out, that in public, exactly as in private life, a tame submission to insult or to injury is the surest method to provoke a second and a more severe aggression.

The catastrophe of Amboyna, which demolished the Company's prospects in the eastern Archipelago; the defeats of the constitution of their body at home; the expenses incident to the struggles of their servants in the East with their inveterate rivals the Portuguese; their want of forts, and consequent reliance on the slippery and selfish policy of the native authorities, brought their affairs to a very low ebb, and it was some time before the tide began to turn again. A fortunate accident, in 1636, led to the establishment of a factory on the banks of the Hoogley, a branch of the Ganges. A medical gentleman, of the name of Boughton, had proceeded from Surat to Agra; and happening to arrive at a moment when the daughter of the Emperor Shah Jehan lay dangerously ill, he was called in, after all the native doctors had exhausted their skill in vain. As the reward of his success in restoring the Princess to health, he received the privilege of carrying on a free trade; and *on going to* Bengal, he won by his skill no less favour with the nabob or soubadar of that country than he had earned at court, and he succeeded in obtaining for the Company those privileges which the emperor had granted to himself personally. In 1640, Boughton, who had been appointed physician to the nabob, with an ample salary, transmitted to Surat an account of these transactions, and of the privileges he had obtained for his countrymen. In consequence, two ships were dispatched to the Hoogley, and the British commerce flourished greatly for a time. A regular factory was soon built (in 1642) on the left or eastern bank of the river, a few miles above the present city of Calcutta, and more than a hundred miles from the sea at the top of the bay of Bengal. Little, doubtless, could the founder of this establishment anticipate the period when the spot on which he and his companions were barely allowed to raise a few humble sheds to cover their bales and boxes, was to become the chief seat of Government of a mighty empire, embracing not only the whole peninsula of Hindustan, but cutting deep into the heart of the continent, over nearly thirty degrees of latitude, as far north as the mountains of Tibet and the sources of the Jumna and Hydaspes! Although the nabob professed all kindness and good-will, he gave strict orders to his officers to superintend the building of the factory, and to prevent the erection of any castle or fort which could render the place convertible into a station of defence. Up to that date, indeed (the middle of the seventeenth century), the Great Mogul had not suffered a single battery to be erected by foreigners in any part of his dominions. All the fortifications, in fact, which the Portuguese first, then the Dutch, and lastly the English, had acquired on the coasts of India, had either been bought or forcibly seized from Hindoo princes, then quite independent of the Mahometan or Mogul authority.

The English in Bengal were likewise prohibited from maintaining any armed force, except one ensign and thirty men to guard their property. The effect of these restrictions was to force the Company's servants to attend exclusively to the advancement of trade; and deputy factors were sent off from time to time to the principal points in the interior of Bengal and Bahar, where the most exquisite fabrics were, and still continued to be, manufactured. The factory contracted with the native merchants for the quantity of goods required, and they, on receiving one-half of the value in specie as a deposit, bound themselves under a penalty to fulfil, at stated periods, their own part of the contract. "By this mode of carrying on the trade," says an able historian, "the Company became invested with a right in all the goods for which they had contracted, even while these goods were in an unwrought or unprepared state; and from this circumstance their purchases then received the appellation of investments, which they have ever since retained."

Matters were not allowed to remain very long in this flourishing condition. Pretexts were readily got up by the subordinate native governments for interfering with the free-trade system, so repugnant to the habits and wants of a profligate and ambitious, and of course, avaricious tyranny. It is indeed wonderful, all things considered, that

the English were allowed to go on so long undisturbed; for, up to 1660, they were exempted from the customs levied on the goods of other merchants. The sight of many spacious buildings, however, crammed full of the richest commodities, drawn together from all parts of the East by the wealth of the Company, and ready to be shipped for Europe, proved too great a temptation for the virtue of the worthy nabob, who insisted upon sharing in this golden harvest. The factors, of course, stoutly resisted this forced partnership in their profits, and produced the emperor's license, granted to Boughton; but that physician being now dead, the document, and all that it contained, was disavowed. The Company's servants, therefore, having no living testimony to produce, could urge nothing more substantial than the undisputed immunities they had enjoyed so long under the sanction of the nabob.

"That is all very well, gentlemen," said the soubadar; "but let me hint, that as you have been indulged all along in these privileges merely by my bounty alone, and not at all by the influence of any superior authority, you will act wisely in handing over to me regularly a per centage upon all your profits, and you will also please to pay an additional duty henceforward on every item of your purchases at Dacca and elsewhere. Now I think of it," added the despot, "I am just at this moment in want of a lac or so of rupees, which I shall be obliged to you to lend me, if you happen to have such a thing in your coffers."

It was of no use for the poor traders to resist; and these exactions went on increasing from day to day, for the nabob thought fit, in right of his own undisputed will and pleasure, to sit in judgment himself upon all differences between the English and his own subjects. And as the decisions of a bench so constituted were almost always in one way, the poor factors drifted sadly to leeward in their speculations, whenever the native merchants fancied it more to their own interest to evade the payment of their debts than to fulfil their engagements; for their own bare testimony, as to the facts at issue, satisfied the judge. Bribery soon found its way into the court as a matter of course; and he who could bestow the most costly presents commanded the most favourable decisions. "Under a government so corrupt and debased," says the writer in the Asiatic Journal, vol. vii., "it will readily be believed that every artifice, both of oppression and fraud, was practised, in order to subject the English to fines and exactions, which when they refused, or even hesitated to pay, their whole trade throughout the province was immediately suspended."

Appeals to the emperor, Shah Jehan, having produced no good effect, the factors in Bengal made up their minds to struggle through their difficulties, and to intrigue and bribe in their turn, but at all hazards to keep possession of so lucrative a trade. To their indefatigable perseverance therefore, and unconquerable patience, the English nation stood indebted for the preservation of their hold on that part of India. What might have been the effect of these measures had the mother country enjoyed any tolerable tranquillity about that period, it is difficult to say; but the Company's affairs, together with the corporation itself, and even their very name, were well nigh swallowed up and lost in the tremendous excitement of the civil war in England. The trade to India was, not unnaturally in such times, thrown open from 1652 to 1657, after which Cromwell thought better of the matter, and renewed the privileges of the Company, greatly to the annoyance of one party in England, who maintained, that if the trade were allowed to remain open, the British merchants could supply all Europe with Indian Commodities, and even undersell the Dutch traders in Amsterdam itself; while another party declared that the nation had lost, during the few years the trade continued open, nearly all their privileges in India. There was a touch of truth on both sides; but what the result of these arguments might have been upon Cromwell's mind can now only be guessed at, as he died shortly afterwards. To the great joy of the Company, Charles the Second gave them a fresh charter, in 1661, investing them not only with exclusive trading privileges for fifteen years, but giving them a right to exercise civil jurisdiction, and to establish military authority. What was of still more importance, it empowered them to make war or to conclude peace with the "infidels of India." This charter, besides sundry minor privileges, permitted the Company to grant licenses to private merchants to traffic from port to port in India; and hence the name of "country traders" came to be applied to a multitude of coasters and other shipping. Of this vast commerce the nation at home see nothing and know little; but it has exercised, from that hour to this, a prodigious influence on the prosperity of India, and, of course, indirectly contributed essentially to the commercial wealth of England. The capital and spirit of enterprise, indeed, are almost all British, which set these active traders in motion, and keep them going in swarms along the whole line of Asiatic coast, from Babelmandel at the mouth of the Red Sea to the Chinese Ocean, and from Acheenhead at the north end of the island of Sumatra, to Cook's Straits, in the savage islands of New Zealand, and indeed, over the whole of the vast Indian Archipelago.

In 1663 Charles the Second obtained the island of Bombay from the Portuguese, as a part of the portion of the Infanta, whom he had married the year before; but finding the cost of maintaining this settlement greater than its revenue, he made it over to the Company in 1668. The circumstances connected with the occupation of that beautiful island and its splendid harbour, are so characteristic of those early periods of our Eastern history, and withal so instructive to public men in any times, that a hasty notice may not be considered uninteresting.

As soon as the British crown obtained a right to the island by treaty, they sent out a squadron, with a suitable force, to take possession. Lord Marleburgh, who had been placed in command of this expedition, repaired to Goa, a Portuguese settlement about two hundred miles south of Bombay, and the residence of the viceroy. His Portuguese excellency, seeing that the treaty was explicit, accompanied the British authorities to Bombay, in order to surrender the establishment to its new masters. But the Portuguese colonists, amongst whom all the land of the island had been distributed, denied the right of their sovereign to turn them over, slave fashion, to any other

power, and especially to a heretical power like that of England; from whom they could expect little toleration on religious matters, even if their right of property were respected. The priests fomented these alarms to such a degree, that the viceroy at length retracted his promise, and refused to give up the place, upon which Marleburgh quietly withdrew from Bombay, and retired to a Portuguese settlement to the north, near Surat. There he landed his troops to gain some refreshment after their long voyage.

But the Portuguese governor, alarmed at their warlike appearance, threatened to demolish the English factory in his neighbourhood, unless the troops immediately re-embarked. Our pacific and complaisant commander-in-chief lost no time in getting on board again; and being now pretty well tired of knocking about in sight of the coast to no purpose, he sent the greater part of his force to an island near Goa, and proceeded himself to England.

The second in command having put the troops on shore, opened a fresh negotiation with the Portugese viceroy for obtaining possession of Bombay; but he made no more way in the matter than his predecessor. Shortly afterwards he, fortunately, sunk under an epidemic disorder, which swept off at the same time most of the remaining troops. Nothing could be better timed than this epidemic; for, although it thinned the ranks and destroyed the greater part of the physical force of the expedition, it made way for a far more efficient moral power, in the intellectual vigour of the secretary, a person up to that moment unknown.

The secretary, now commander-in-chief, at once negotiated a treaty with the Portuguese, the terms of which, without pertinaciously adhering to the unjust spirit of the original instrument, were sufficiently in accordance with it to be legal. What is more to the purpose, this new treaty was framed with a strict regard to the principles of justice and good sense, as well as consideration for the prejudices of the Portuguese inhabitants. All these had been overlooked in the original treaty made in Europe, in the most unfeeling manner; but Mr. Cook not only expressly and cheerfully stipulated that the existing occupiers of the soil should be guaranteed in the undisturbed possession of their estates, but that they should be protected in the full and free exercise of their religion.

The leading men amongst the colonists, who saw that at least they had to deal with an honourable man of business, immediately acquiesced in these arrangements, and allowed the island to be peaceably taken possession of. This desirable conclusion might probably have been reached at any previous moment of the expedition, had the original commander-in-chief been a man of sense and decision of character.

Mr. Cook having assumed the government of Bombay pro tempore, in right of his own masculine understanding, transmitted to England a careful account of all his proceedings. Doubtless, he was well prepared for what followed, for he could hardly expect that the ministers who had followed up such a precious treaty with such an inefficient expedition, were likely to approve of the enlightened views which a subordinate person like Mr. Cook had taken of the subject. Accordingly, they disavowed all he had done, and sent out Sir Samuel Lucas as governor, with full powers to make such alterations as he might think fit, after investigating the condition and circumstances of the inhabitants. These sweeping powers, had they been intrusted to injudicious hands, might have overturned the whole, because there appears to have been no proviso about keeping faith with the inhabitants under Mr. Cook's treaty. Most fortunately, however, the plenipotentiary found the island in so settled and tranquil a state, and the Portuguese so contented with their new government, that he considered it not only unjust, but highly inexpedient, to annul, or even to alter any part of the recent treaty. What is still more pleasant, he took upon himself to confirm Mr. Cook as governor of the island, and then returned to England, leaving it to the able negotiator who by his own abilities had gained the island, to complete its defences, and render it a useful possession to his country.

The history of British India, in all its various departments, is crowded with instances similar to that which has just been related, where men, totally unknown before, have been unexpectedly brought into action, sometimes when they themselves least expected it. Thus, men of the most modest and even humble pretensions, have, in India, often succeeded in raising the renown of their own country, and eminently advancing the happiness of millions of the natives, besides leaving for themselves a celebrity which hardly any combination of circumstances could have won for them anywhere else. Birth, patronage, wealth, and other sources of power, may, indeed, in all countries do a great deal to elevate the fortunes, and even the fame of some favoured persons. But it requires the stimulus of disaster, and the perils of unequal contest, and, perhaps, the failure of all the ordinary resources of war and politics, in such a wide and varied field as India, to call into the full light of the highest class of distinction such master-spirits as Hastings, and Clive, and Coote, and Wellesley, and many others, whose names, though not so well known to us at home as these are, will continue familiar as household words in Asia, as long as the history of our Eastern empire is heard of even by tradition.

In the early part of the reign of King Charles II., which corresponds to that of the Great Mogul emperor, Aurungzebe, the English, in spite of all the opposition of their rivals abroad, and the distraction of the fierce civil wars at home, together with their own financial difficulties, contrived gradually to attain a considerable degree of stability and importance among the nations of India. They had begun to form political connexions, and to assume something of a military spirit and character, which, though their operations may be difficult to trace, unquestionably form the germ of that power by which they were afterwards distinguished. They now possess settlements on both sides of the peninsula: at Baroach, Surat, Bombay, Tellicherry, and Calicut, all lying on the western, or Malabar coast: at Conjeveram, Madras, and Masulipatam, on the eastern, or Coromandel coast: besides which, they possessed various other establishments on the shores of Orissa and of Bengal, near the mouth of the Ganges. Amongst

the Indian Islands, they still retained a factory at Bencoolen, on the western side of Sumatra; and one at Acheen, on the north end of that gigantic island, which lies so nicely balanced across the equator. In Java, also, near the western extremity, they owned an establishment at Bantam. Even to Siam and Tonquin, and as far off as Amoz, on the coast of China, and still further to the island of Formosa, these industrious traders had extended their feelers with more or less success. Surat, on the west coast of the peninsula, was then the grand head-quarters, as Calcutta is now, with which the chiefs and agents of all the different subordinate establishments were instructed to correspond. There occurred no very great difficulty in complying with such orders in the case of those establishments on the Continent of India; but the official intercourse between the presidency of Surat and the factories in the Eastern Archipelago and coast of China, became, in those days of imperfect communication, little more than nominal.

James II. granted increased immunities to the East India Company; he also authorised them to build forts, to levy troops, to determine causes by court-martial, and to coin money. By these and other privileges, they were raised to a station which they disgraced by a thousand acts of corruption, violence, and tyrannical oppression. In 1694, the Company obtained a fresh charter from Queen Mary; but parliament having detected sundry abuses in their affairs, and a furious party having started up in England against them, they had enough to do to maintain their existence. The merchants who were excluded from the Indian commerce by the monopoly of the Company, and who by them were termed interlopers, naturally joined against these exclusive privileges, and at length succeeded in outbidding their rivals, and obtaining a charter in 1698 as partial as that against which they had so vehemently complained. The old Company, however, again raised their heads, and next year obtained a confirmation of their former charter; so that England had now two East India Companies, both established by Act of Parliament, instead of one acting under the King's prerogative. The contests between these rival bodies soon rose to a high pitch; but, as Lord Nelson said of another species of warfare, "it was too hot to last long," and, after much absurd altercation, they united their stock, and assumed, early in the eighteenth century, (22d July, 1702,) that name under which they have ever since been incorporated, "The United Company of Merchants trading to the East Indies."

It may easily be imagined, that while these disputes were raging between the rival companies at home, their respective servants abroad were not idle; in fact, the very existence of both in the East was placed at hazard by these internal dissensions. Nor was it to be expected that animosities so deeply rooted should at once subside, upon the union of the principals at home; but the obvious necessity of the case, or rather the pressing pecuniary advantages of compromising these squabbles, in order to prevent the intrusion of third parties, speedily led to an adjustment. The Government required from the United Company, in exchange for a very favourable charter, a loan of more than a million sterling, without interest; and the parties most concerned in staving off the inconveniences of this loan, and in making the best bargain they could with Government, soon saw the fitness of uniting cordially in order to avert the common danger. It was at length agreed to submit these questions to the Earl of Godolphin, Lord High Treasurer of England, by whose award the Company agreed to abide. The details of this arrangement are not otherwise interesting, except that they led to an amalgamation of the property and debts of the two rival parties, both at home and in India. Their affairs then became quite interlaced, and their interests, consequently, inseparable; and from that time forward, the intercourse of the English with the native powers of India has been much more intimate, extensive, and every way important.

CHAPTER III.

THE FRENCH IN INDIA—BLACK HOLE AT CALCUTTA—HYDER ALI'S INVASION OF THE CARNATIC.

The affairs of the Company soon began to prosper merrily, both at home and abroad, under the double influence of political and commercial peace; for the treaty of Utrecht, in 1713, by allowing the enterprise of the different nations of Europe to find its best exercise in the promotion of mutual advantage at home, extended its salutary influence to their respective adventurers in the East. The capital and talent which had formerly been wasted by the two English Companies in counteracting each other's wishes, were now combined to produce the common end of gainful traffic; and as the British settlements in India were about that period managed by persons of considerable prudence and ability, everything for a time went on well. But it happened then—as it always will happen—that when England was deprived of the fervent excitement of war, her energies became disengaged from the details of foreign contention, and her people soon began to cast about for fresh topics of agitation in their own civil matters at home. Accordingly, as the success of the United Company trading to the East Indies had become notorious, they were not long allowed to enjoy their prosperity in peace and quietness. The watchword of "monopoly!" rung over the country, and interlopers, as they were called, soon began to thrust themselves into the field. These interlopers consisted chiefly of British traders serving under foreign flags; and it cost the Company not a little trouble to put them down, by royal proclamations and acts of parliament formed expressly for the punishment of all such competitors. A rival set of foreign traders also started up against them about this time (1716) in the shape of an Ostend Company, under the sanction of the Emperor of Germany, and consequent upon the acquisition of the Netherlands by the house of Austria. The old Dutch Company became equally alarmed at the activity of these intruders, and on several occasions actually interfered by force to put down this rivalry. Our United Merchants contented themselves with acts of parliament prohibiting foreign adventurers to India under severe penalties, and

giving the East India Company power to seize and send home all British subjects found in the East, who were not in the service, or did not bear the license, of the said body corporate; and thus, after a time, by these combined means, their foreign opposition was beaten out of the field.

This opposition, though a mere bugbear, answered the purpose of frightening these monopolists into caution, and, no doubt, prepared them for the more formidable rivalry of the French, who were then considered our national enemies, and who, even in these enlightened days, and in spite of the march of intellect, reform, free trade, and liberality to boot, are still, and will, probably, ever continue to be so considered. After struggling in vain for the greater part of the seventeenth century, and the early years of the eighteenth, the French succeeded, about 1720, in establishing an East India Company, the commercial returns for which proved so considerable, that both the English traders and their government began to fidget under this new competition. The nation at large, therefore, who took part with the Company, looked forward with pleasure to a war which should enable them, at all events, to throw the French interlopers overboard. On the other hand, our great rivals, who, as we all well know, are hearty fighters, when war is agreed upon, felt so anxious to protect their rising commerce in the East, that they actually proposed, that "when the war in Europe commenced," there should be no quarrel between their respective Companies on the shores of Hindustan. But it was idle in the French to expect that while their fleet and ours were thundering at one another in the Channel, and our armies crossing bayonets in the Low Countries, there would be less active national animosity on the coast of Coromandel.

There is an amusing apologue bearing on this point of politics in one of the fables of Pilpay. It was agreed, it seems, between the two great political rivals in the woods—the tiger and the lion—that their respective subjects, prowling near a well-stocked but distant sheepfold, should not interfere with one another while the two monarchs fought out their quarrel by fair means at home. The Persian poet draws a veil over the particulars of the struggle at head-quarters, but presents us with a pretty picture of the foraging party of triumphant lions next day in full occupation of the sheepfold, and in close alliance with the terrified shepherds—while not a single tiger, he assures us, was to be seen in the field.

In 1744, "the war that for a space did fail," broke out in Europe between the French and English; and the flame, in spite of all pacific contracts, soon spread to Asia, where by a policy as short-sighted as that of Pilpay's shepherds, the native princes of the country permanently sacrificed their nationality for the attainment of mere transient objects of personal hatred or ambition. Whatever may have been the effects on the natives of this singular contest between the members of the French and English Companies on the plains of Hindustan, its salutary consequences on the British interests in that quarter of the world proved eventually very great. Heretofore nothing could have been more lawless, or sooth to say, in many instances more corrupt or oppressive, than the conduct of the East India Company's servants in the East. Most of them appear to have recognised no principle but that of avarice, for they sought alone to advance their own pecuniary interests and those of their relations and dependants. In proportion as their strength and means in other respects increased, so did their greediness and oppression. From less to more, iniquity at last became the fashion; and as there seldom existed any very obvious or high motive to honour, but always a pretty high pecuniary motive to venality close at hand, accompanied by little or no personal danger from such gainful practices, nothing can well be conceived worse than the whole system soon became. When, however, a good, honest, avowed war broke out between the rival European nations, more manly and generous motives were substituted for those of mere money-making; and the huckstering spirit of commercial squabbling was supplanted by the point of honour. Danger and difficulty, indeed, in all times, and in all countries, prove marvellous teachers of humility and docility on the part of those who, in times of peace, are sure to be the most noisy, arrogant, and untractable. From the very same causes, in seasons of great trial, the modest and the brave, the most gifted and the best-informed members of every community, float naturally to the surface, and soon come into universal notice.

So, at all events, it proved in India about the middle of the last century, where the contest was no longer carried on between obscure and unobserved factors, agents, or traders, but between high-bred and intelligent officers, men of character and responsibility, acting under the full observation of their country and the world. At first, of course, the master-spirits who were then in the field could not be expected to impart to the public service at large any great portion of their own taste in these matters, chiefly because the system of Indian rule had heretofore been so radically bad, that it required a long period to weed out the abuses. Ere long, however, India became, for the first time, a scene in which character was duly appreciated, and reputation was to be earned as well as money gained. Many names were then first heard which have long taken a distinguished station in history. Lawrence, and Clive, and Coote, and many more, might be enumerated, whose fame even the splendour and proximity of modern deeds have scarcely dimmed.

During the fierce war waged by the French and English in the Carnatic, on the eastern side of the peninsula, between 1744 and 1748, when the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle gave them breathing time, the English were taught some severe lessons. For example, M. Labourdonnais landed and pressed the English so closely, that they were obliged to come to terms for the surrender of Madras, after it had been in possession of the English for more than a century. The garrison, unwilling to give up the town, stipulated for a ransom; but the Frenchman, on the other hand, although he had no objection to the ransom, felt naturally desirous also of the "gloire" of hoisting the flag of his nation over the works of Fort St. George. He therefore made an arrangement, to which he pledged his honour, that immediately after taking possession, and merely displaying the French banner on the walls, he would give the

place back again upon the payment of a moderate sum of money. This singular contract, however, was totally disapproved of, and for a time effectually crossed, by another French authority, the Governor of Pondicherry, M. Dupleix, a name then becoming well known in the East.

The French, it may be remarked, held at that time two principal positions or presidencies on the eastern side of the Cape of Good Hope :—one at the Isle of France, in the Indian ocean; the other at Pondicherry, on the Coromandel coast. M. Labourdonnais was Governor of the Isle of France and the other insular possessions of the French, and M. Dupleix of those of the continent of India. Accordingly, when the English sent a squadron to those seas, on the breaking out of the war in 1744, M. Labourdonnais lost no time in proceeding after them, as soon as he ascertained that they had passed the Isle of France. This distinguished French officer, who thought and acted for himself, succeeded in pushing his opponents out of the way, and, as I have already mentioned, capturing Madras. Independently of the terms upon which he acquired this fortress, it appears that the French admiral had positive orders from his own government not to make any territorial conquests whatever; and he accordingly prepared to give back the presidency to the English in the spirit of these instructions as well as those of the treaty of ransom. But the continental governor, Mons. Dupleix, within whose department the conquest had taken place, saw the matter in a different light.

To him nothing could seem more preposterous than giving up a position such as that of Madras, by whatever means acquired. He entreated, scolded, commanded, but all in vain; and Labourdonnais being a man of honour, prepared to surrender his prize in terms of his promise. The ships under Labourdonnais, however, were sorely pressed by want; and M. Dupleix, hoping to compel his colleague into submission, refused all assistance to his own country's fleet, and at last, with great joy, he beheld them dispersed by a gale of wind. To such lengths did this wily governor carry his anxiety to gain permanent possession of Madras by the discomfiture of Labourdonnais, that he actually tried, though in vain, to raise a mutiny amongst the French ships, hoping that the admiral might be sent prisoner to Pondicherry! At last poor Labourdonnais was obliged to agree that the period of evacuation of Madras should be altered from the 15th of October, 1746, to the 15th of January, 1747. This was enough for Monsieur Dupleix. The Monsoon rendered it impossible for the fleet to remain, and Labourdonnais went off; Dupleix, meanwhile, laughing at the convention, kept fast hold of Madras, and declared the treaty of ransom annulled. He then took possession of the keys of all the magazines, and carried the English governor and the principal inhabitants prisoners to Pondicherry! Ere long, fresh reinforcements came out from Europe to both parties; and Admiral Boscawen would probably have punished M. Dupleix for his flagrant breach of faith in the case of Madras, by taking Pondicherry, had not the news arrived, in November 1749, of the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, by an express stipulation of which Madras was to be given up by the French.

Still, neither party in India seems ever to have thought that peace between France and England could possibly mean anything more than a truce, or temporary cessation of hostilities. At all events, the respective French and English armies were kept up with as much care as possible; and as they could not with any propriety go to loggerheads directly with each other, until their principals in Europe gave the signal, they employed their forces in assisting the different native princes, and fitting them to their own ends against the season of renewed hostilities. This system of intriguing led to such complicated embarrassments on both sides, that the Directors at home, in utter despair of disentangling the ravelled skein which their servants had wound for them in India, applied to their respective sovereigns to mediate between the conflicting French and English companies. At the very moment, however, that reasonable terms had been proposed, and almost agreed upon, the war of 1756 broke out, and, of course, out flew also the swords of the Europeans in India, eager to cut the Gordian knot which their respective companies had been so busily engaged in tying during the half-a-dozen years of peace.

The war, which soon raged briskly in India, gained a new and important character by the alliance of the adjacent native powers. Dupleix, whose star reigned in the ascendant for some time amongst the powers of India, not only conceived the grand idea of nominating the nabob of the Carnatic, and also of essentially influencing the affairs of the Deccan, or middle part of the peninsula, lying farther north, but he hoped to bring the imperial throne of Delhi within his range. And certainly, had this energetic officer been duly supported by his government, or even by his own countrymen in India, he might have executed a considerable part of these splendid political enterprises, which, though deemed by most people at the time absolutely visionary, have since been far eclipsed by the policy and arms of the British.

Further to the east, also, English affairs seemed to be falling to pieces. Suraja Dowlah, a powerful native, advanced, in 1756, upon Calcutta, and so terrified the authorities, that they scampered off in such indecent and inexcusable haste, as to take no charge of the hindmost, whom they left to the proverbial care of a certain respectable personage. The governor himself was of the number who took such good care of themselves, and escaped in the boats. The celebrated "Black Hole," however, into which his colleague Mr. Holwell, and one hundred and forty-six of the unfortunate garrison, who could not find means of escaping, were thrust, would seem a fit residence for persons who thus pusillanimously deserted their friends at such a moment.

The details of this horrid story were once very familiar to the public; but as time diminishes the knowledge of such things, it may not be out of place to mention, that of a hundred and forty-six prisoners, only twenty-three were taken out alive next morning! This dungeon, called by the garrison the "Black Hole," was only twenty feet square, so that each individual had not much above two square feet and a half to stand upon, or somewhat less than the space covered by an

ordinary chess-board. This confined room was fitted with two small windows, and these were obstructed by the verandah. It was in the hottest month of the year, and the night also happened to be particularly sultry. The excessive pressure of the bodies of the prisoners soon convinced them that it would be impossible for many of them to live through the night. Violent, but vain attempts, were made to force the door. Mr. Holwell succeeded in getting near one of the windows, and by his remonstrances he produced a short interval of quiet, during which he applied to an officer outside, "who," as Orme, the historian, says, "bore some marks of humanity in his countenance, and by the promise of a thousand rupees induced him to apply for a separation of the prisoners. The old man went to try, but returned with the fatal sentence, that no relief could be expected, "because the nabob was asleep and no one dared to wake him."

For most of the dreadful details of that horrid night, I must refer to Orme and other writers. It may be enough to mention that the first effect of the confinement seems to have been a profuse perspiration; then intolerable and raging thirst; next excruciating pains in the breast, with difficulty of breathing, little short of suffocation. Various means were attempted by the unhappy prisoners to gain room. They stripped off their clothes, and several times tried the experiment of sitting down; but when the order was given to rise again, numbers always sank dead to the ground! Some skins of water were brought to the window; but as no one could wait to be regularly served, furious and fatal contests took place, during which the water was scattered uselessly over their heads. Delirium and stupefaction beset most of those who remained alive. Dreadful struggles and mortal combats then arose in the attempts to reach the windows; so that, at two in the morning, not more than fifty remained alive. Mr. Holwell had sunk apparently dead in the heap when daylight broke; but as it was thought he might have more influence than the others at the window, he was drawn up, and Captain Mills, with rare generosity, resigned his fresh air place to him. Mr. Holwell had scarcely begun to recover his senses when the nabob sent to know if the chief of the English was alive, and being told that he had survived the night, the prison-door was unlocked. But even then the dead were so piled one upon another, and the survivors had so little strength remaining, that they were employed near half-an-hour in removing the bodies which lay against the door, before they could open a passage to go out, one at a time.

Calcutta was recovered by the gallantry and skill of the great Clive and Admiral Watson, early in the following year, 1757, at the celebrated battle of Plassey, nearly about the time that accounts of renewed hostilities in Europe reached India. This success gave Clive a vast accession of influence in the provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, the details of which it would be difficult to condense. Notwithstanding these sucesses, the French influence about this period had reached nearly the highest point it ever attained in India. M. Bussy, a great French commander, had gained such advantages in the northern part of the peninsula, and had made himself so powerful in the Deccan, that he was earnestly entreated by Suraja Dowlah to assist him in expelling their common enemy, the pestilent English, as he termed them, from Bengal. This being an enterprise after M. Bussy's own heart, he cheerfully agreed to co-operate with the native prince; and there is no saying what might have been the result, had not the splendid successes of Clive broken up the alliance. Bussy's activity, however, found ample employment in the Circars and other places, where he made his power felt much to our cost.

Meanwhile (1757) a large French reinforcement, under Count de Lally, an officer who had distinguished himself at the battle of Fontenoy in the year 1745, arrived at Pondicherry as commander-in-chief of the French forces in India. This energetic, but rather precipitate person, lost no time in laying siege to Madras, and after taking possession of the black town, had almost succeeded in capturing the fort, when Admiral Pococke arrived at the critical moment, and raised the siege. Lally then fell back, and set to work to strengthen himself and worry the English by forming alliances with the neighbouring nabobs. The English, however, could likewise play at this game, and it is quite distracting to read of the endless intrigues and counter-intrigues with the Mahometan states into which these motives led both the European parties. Well might Orme exclaim, "That the native governments of India have no idea of national honour in the conduct of their politics; and as soon as they think the party with whom they are engaged is reduced to great distress, they shift their alliance without hesitation to the opposite side, making immediate advantage the only rule of their action."

It was reserved for a later period of our Indian history to act entirely above board, and to free ourselves from the contamination of these unworthy and pliable politics, of which, at first, it had been so vainly imagined permanent advantage might be taken by honourable men. Generally speaking, the cumbersome alliance of the different native powers whom the French or British either coaxed or awed into companionship, proved fully as mischievous as beneficial. Their means of assistance stood generally in the inverse ratio of their pretensions, while their good faith, so to call it, owned no rule but that of their apparent interest.

At the peace of 1763 the English remained sovereigns of the rich provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, the northern Circars, part of the Carnatic, and all their old possessions on the Malabar or western coast. The resources of their allies, the nabob of the Carnatic, and the vizier of Oude, were likewise almost entirely at their disposal.

Shortly after the middle of the eighteenth century, about the year 1760, the celebrated Hyder Ali came into the field. This able chief was of a stamp very different, in many respects, from any native authority whom either of the rival European nations fighting in the East had hitherto measured swords withal. Like the French and English, Hyder was himself an interloper in authority; for, though a native of the Mysore country, he possessed no legitimate title to the throne. In fact, he was merely an officer of the Hindoo Rajah, or king of that country, and a very subordinate officer too, being no more than

a corporal ; hence one of the names by which he is still known among the natives, Hyder Naig—Naig or Naik being the Indian word for that non-commissioned functionary. By a series of measures combining much boldness and cunning, under the guidance of a spirit of unprincipled and merciless ambition, and of talents vastly above the average of his countrymen, he contrived in the end to overthrow the ancient Hindoo dynasty of Mysore, and to establish a Mussulman succession in its place. He had sagacity enough to perceive, very early in his career of usurpation, that the legitimacy of his authority, which owed in truth nothing to justice or prescriptive usage, would not be treated with much respect by either of the contending European parties, supposing one or other of them to gain any great ascendancy in India. As he probably hated both French and English with equal intensity, his greatest happiness would unquestionably have been to sit still and see the two rival companies demolish one another as completely as did the two Kilkenny cats in the story ; after which it would have been easy for Hyder to have rid his country of the remaining tip of the tail—he cared not which. Such, no doubt, must have been his fondest hopes ; but the Topee Wallas, or "hat-wearers," who had chosen the level plains of Coromandel as their Oriental Flanders, on which arena to fight out their quarrels, seemed only to increase in strength, like bars of steel by hammering. Hyder, therefore, from the high land of Mysore, perceived the necessity of deciding which of them he should choose as an ally, not—Heaven knows !—out of any good-will to either, but purely to secure the eventual ruin of both. This was statesman-like and patriotic ; and his election of the French for his allies further showed his sagacity ; for the choice certainly gave him and his country a chance for independence, which an opposite course could never have done.

Hyder, who was unquestionably a very able man, appears to have well understood the characters of the two European nations fighting before him ; and he probably reasoned in this way :

"If I side with the English, we two shall presently beat the French out of the country. But will not these English then turn about and demolish me ? Whereas, if I join the French, and by our joint exertions we extirpate the English, it will not cost me much trouble afterwards to put Monsieur Jean Crapaud across the surf."

Hyder became accordingly a steady friend of the French ; and right well did he fight their battle against us ; and after him, his son Tippoo, who was bred in the same school, even bettered by the instruction.

Tippoo, by the way, famously made out Mr. Shandy's theory of the efficacy of names in modifying character, inasmuch as Tippoo, in the Canarese language, means Tiger. This name was bestowed by Hyder, from his son having been born near a superb mausoleum at Arcot, dedicated to the celebrated Mahometan devotee "Tippoo Sultan ;" a spot which still continues to be a favourite resort of all devout Mussulmen in Coromandel. The word sultan, I also learn from Wilks (vol. ii. p. 567), signifies the conqueror of his passions, or the spiritual king or lord. Thus, since the tiger amongst the Indians is considered the monarch of the woods, as the lion is with us, both the members of the sultan's name indicated sovereignty. He himself, indeed, showed his agreeable recollection of this connexion, by adopting the stripe of the royal tiger as a part of his insignia.

An accidental circumstance having led to Hyder's being appointed to the command of a fortress, when still a subordinate officer under the Hindoo dynasty, he availed himself of his command to prepare means for enacting the robber on a great scale. Barbarous inroads were in those days common all over India, sometimes by Pindaries, sometimes by Mahrattas, and generally in a wild and tumultuous manner, grievously scourging to the wretched inhabitants, who always suffered ten times more in proportion than the invaders ever gained, since, for one bullock or sack of rice carried off, ten were sure to be slaughtered or flung to waste. The Mysore country was ravaged by the Mahrattas in 1759 ; in 1761, by Bunee Visagee Pundit ; and in 1765, 67, and 70, by Madoo Row ; in 1771 by Trimbue Row ; in 1774, by Ragoonaut Row ; in 1776 and 86 by Hurry Punt ; and, lastly, in 1791 and 92, it sustained the most merciless ravaging it had ever been afflicted with, from the troops of Purseram Bow, a fierce marauder. These, as I have before mentioned, were undisciplined and desolating incursions, sweeping like whirlwinds over the country, and invariably leaving famine and pestilence to glean the fields which the wholesale invaders had cut down.

Hyder, who was a gentleman-like robber compared to these fellows, plundered his country in a much more systematic style. There are, it appears, or at least there were in those days, in most of the Indian states, a species of troops, or rather armed men, trained in the arts of plunder and theft in all their ramifications, and disciplined also after a fashion to resist attacks as well as to invade defended positions. Hyder became the captain of an immense gang of these cut-throats, numerous parties of whom he used to send out to pillage far and near, while he modestly contented himself with one-half of the spoil. Though he could never manage to learn to read or write, he yet kept such an exact arithmetical account in his memory, and possessed such multifarious checks upon the operations of his ragamuffins, that it became almost impossible to rob or cheat the man who robbed and cheated all the world. Hyder cared little, and his gang nothing, whether friends or foes were plundered, so long as the safety was equal. Grain, cattle, sheep, clothing, turbans, the anklets and ear-rings of travellers, and even of peaceful villagers, were all alike to him. In this way he gradually collected together property enough to enable him to go to war, at the fittest moment, in a more open and soldier-like style. In process of time, Hyder found himself at the head of fifteen hundred horse, and nearly five thousand foot soldiers. Backed by these troops, though he still rendered nominal allegiance to the reigning Hindoo monarch, he cruised about over his own country, Mysore, and the adjacent territories, pretty much at will. In reading the accounts of the silent and stealthy way in which this cunning warrior moved from place to place, one is perpetually reminded of the manner in which a tiger

quietly watches for the most suitable moment to make his fatal spring. It cost Hyder, in fact, only two good leaps to seat himself on the throne of Mysore.

An invasion of the Mahrattas—the every-day occurrence of that wretched period—afforded him the first opportunity. As nobody was considered strong enough to resist these freebooters but the formidable Hyder Naig,—that is, "Hyder the corporal," he was accordingly appointed commander-in-chief of the army. This was all he wanted at that stage of his career. He speedily justified his appointment by drubbing and driving back the Mahrattas, and forcing them to consent to a favourable treaty. The poor Rajah, the nominal sovereign of Mysore, was then, as most of his brother-sovereigns in India were, under the direct control of a despotic Premier. A mutiny being readily got up, the troops deposed the minister, and placed Hyder at their head. The Rajah was then kindly permitted to enjoy a certain degree of liberty; while Hyder, in order (as he said) to pacify the tumultuous troops, consented to take charge of more than half of the Rajah's dominions. But, had he wished it, he could at once have reduced the army to order by holding up his little finger.

At this moment the usurper was made sensible of his own rising consequence in the balance of power by an application from M. Lally to unite with the French in expelling the English. I have already mentioned, that he cheerfully agreed to co-operate in this great national undertaking. But Hyder had also his own private and immediate purposes to serve, as he wished to secure a district lying between his recently appropriated slice of Mysore and the Carnatic, which lay between him and the bay of Bengal, on the eastern side of the peninsula. While he was deeply busied with these intrigues, the legitimate Rajah's mother had well nigh upset Hyder's authority altogether, by uniting to the regular Mysore troops a force of Mahrattas, a sort of mercenaries always at hand, it appears, for any such desperate purpose. Hyder's camp being surrounded, he was all but destroyed, though he contrived to escape, and having reached Bangalore, he entered that fort before orders came to shut him out. His troops, however, which were hastening to his relief, were intercepted by the Mahrattas, who might and would have cut them off, had they not been bribed by the offer of one of Hyder's territories. The attention of these freebooters was diverted at the same moment by the offer of a sum of money made by the English to detach them from M. Lally, who, in his turn, had also trafficked with the same party of Mahrattas, in order to induce them to take part with the French then besieged in Pondicherry! Thus, these robbers, in addition to what regular plunder fell in their way coming and going, pocketed no fewer than three douceurs from three different powers, while all the parties hated one another with the most undisguised bitterness, thus affording a tolerably characteristic specimen of political prostitution. After a few more intrigues, and now and then a little fighting, Hyder became the undisputed sovereign of Mysore, and within a very few years afterwards he had consolidated his power so much, that he marched (in 1769) directly towards Madras, the very presidency itself, the head-quarters of the English; and having encamped within ten miles of the fort, he may be said almost to have dictated his own terms. He had just made a successful incursion, according to his annual custom, into the Carnatic; and as the English, who were unprovided with cavalry, could neither overtake him nor interrupt his devastations, he swept, in his merciless style of warfare, the greatest part of the southern division of that country, sent his plunder home, and then, as I have just mentioned, he came to St. Thomas's Mount, to beard and bully the English Government.—In this he succeeded completely, and having made a treaty of alliance and defence with the Company, retired to his own country.

About the middle of 1778, intelligence was received in India of the fresh war in Europe between the French and English. But the local contests, and the other transactions with which we were involved in India, rendered hostilities with the French a subordinate concern, instead of being, as before, one of the first importance. Nevertheless, we hailed with joy, as usual, an opportunity of coming to blows with our old antagonists; and although we very soon deprived them of their presidency Pondicherry, Hyder Ali still gave us ample occupation. He had been so much worried by those infamous marauders the Mahrattas, that he called upon the government at Madras to fulfil the terms of their treaty of April 4th, 1769, by which the Company had undoubtedly bound themselves to assist him. The English, however, fought shy of the defensive stipulations of the treaty, which evasion on their part irritated Hyder to the last degree. But he prudently reserved his indignation until the Mahrattas were driven back, and then he had time to think of the English, whom he congratulated, ironically, on their capture of Pondicherry, giving them at the same time abundant evidence that he bore them anything but good-will. In fact, with his usual caution, he only waited for his moment. In July 1780, accordingly, he descended the Ghauts with an army of not fewer than ninety thousand men, of whom twenty thousand were formed into regular battalions, mostly commanded by Frenchmen. His cavalry amounted to nearly thirty thousand. To these were added a hundred pieces of cannon, managed by Europeans, or by natives formerly trained by the English for the service of a nabob, one of their allies, from whom Hyder had seduced them. Monsieur Lally, of course, joyfully agreed to join the party with several corps of Frenchmen; and he also took a considerable share in planning and conducting the expedition.

This formidable inroad of Hyder spread dismay from one end of the Carnatic to the other, and grievously perplexed the councils of the Madras government. I found many of the details still fresh in the memory of old persons in those countries more than thirty years afterwards. The British troops were soon called in from their outposts, and letters full of alarm written to the other presidencies and subordinate settlements. But the governor, the council, and the general in command, instead of being united, fell by the ears, thwarted one another's operations, and thus greatly diminished the efficiency of the means in their power. An advance of troops was indeed made;

but, owing partly to an error on our side, arising from deficient information, and partly to the activity and numbers of Hyder and the address of Lally, a division of the British army, under Colonel Baillie, was cut off and entirely destroyed near Conjeveram. It was on this occasion that Sir David Baird was captured, and carried to Seringapatam. Hyder's son, Tippoo Sultan, was a chief actor in this disastrous affair, in which he commanded a detachment.

Colonel Baillie's conduct was most gallant, but all his intrepidity, and that of his companions, availed nothing against the mighty host which Hyder brought upon him. About two hundred prisoners were taken to Seringapatam, and subjected to a captivity said to be more horrible than death. It is particularly pleasant to know, that all the French officers, from Lally downwards, exerted themselves unceasingly to alleviate the sufferings of the English prisoners. The French, indeed, were provoked to the last degree with the ferocity of Hyder and his hopeful son, while the natives could not repress their astonishment at the sympathy expressed by their European allies in the fate of such determined enemies as the English. Hyder Ali was cruel upon principle, rather than vindictive or unfeeling by nature, and it suited his policy at that moment, as he thought, to chastise his fallen enemies ; but it does not appear that he took any intrinsic pleasure in witnessing the sufferings of others, when their pain did not contribute to his own ease or profit. The following sketch of this part of his character is drawn by one who had the most ample means, short of personal acquaintance, of knowing him. It serves to fill up some blanks in one's idea of a regular and absolutely uncontrolled tyrant, and what was deficient in Hyder's character, his worthy son Tippoo amply supplied.

"Those brilliant and equivocal virtues," says Wilks, in his history of Mysore, "which gild the crimes of other conquerors, were utterly unknown to the breast of Hyder. No admiration of bravery in resistance, or of fortitude in the fallen, ever excited sympathy, or softened the cold calculating decision of their fate. No contempt for unmanly submission ever aggravated the treatment of the abject and mean. Everything was weighed in the balance of utility ; and no grain of human feeling, no breath of virtue or vice, was permitted to incline the beam. In council, he had no adviser and no confidant. And there was but one solitary example of feelings incident to our nature, affection for his unworthy son Tippoo Sultan, whom he nominated to be his successor,—while uniformly, earnestly, and broadly predicting that this son would lose the empire which he himself had gained."

The supineness of the government of Madras at the time Hyder was known to all the rest of the world to be preparing to overrun the Carnatic, is something altogether inexplicable. On Hyder's part nothing appears to have been omitted, and no department escaped his personal inspection ; so that he marched from his capital in the month of June, 1780, with a force which had probably not been equalled, and certainly not surpassed, in strength and efficiency, by any native army that had ever been assembled in the south of India. Hyder's ultimate object was, not the destruction, but the permanent conquest of the Carnatic, and the entire extinction of the English in the south of India. The prevalent impression, however, is, that on his first descent from Mysore, he perpetrated the wanton and indiscriminate destruction of the whole country. This sort of proceeding might have suited the taste of his vindictive, bull-headed son, Tippoo, but would have been out of character with the sagacious Hyder, who, as I have before observed, was never cruel or destructive except upon principle ; and if he were guiltless of any feeling of remorse or tenderness, he was equally unconscious of any motive to active revenge without an ultimate military purpose. What he actually did in the way of desolation, is quite sufficient to give us an idea of the nature of an Indian incursion. When we know, therefore, that the evil done to the invaded country, and the cruelties inflicted upon the native inhabitants, were studiously and systematically limited to their lowest amount, by a long-sighted and powerful soldier in command of an army under perfect obedience to his will, we may form some faint conception (but I am told only a very faint conception) of the dreadful misery of those almost perennial invasions to which the greater number of the states of India were exposed before the full establishment of the British power. If there be defects in our modern system of Indian administration (as no doubt there are), who that has ever glanced over any record of those days antecedent to the consolidation of our paramount authority, will deny that the total and permanent exemption from such bitter scourges is a blessing of the highest order, far more than sufficient to compensate for innumerable minor privations? Even one moderate and well-regulated inroad, such as that of Hyder into the Carnatic in 1780, includes, in the space of a few weeks, tenfold more actual distress than the most industrious collector of charges against the East India Company could scrape together in the half century which has since elapsed. And our respect will increase for the present admirable system of government, which it is so much the fashion, as a matter of course, to abuse, when we consider, as we ought in fairness to consider, that the unspeakable blessing of security, peace, and protection, together with the most unbounded religious toleration and personal freedom from interference in every custom to which the natives are attached, are not confined to the Carnatic alone, nor to the limits of the three presidencies. It forms, indeed, the true praise and glory of the East India Company, that this government of security and tranquillity not only spreads far and wide over the whole peninsula of Hindustan, but extends high into the north, to the very sources of the Indus and Ganges. Unfortunately, however, for the well-deserved fame of the East India Company, it is much easier to point out the evils of those horrid and lawless Mahratta and Pindary incursions, and the almost total absence of good government which existed in former days, than to explain the benefits of the system by which these and many other evils have been done away with. A house on fire, or a country submerged by an inundation, are evils within the ken of every booby in the neighbourhood, and the story of destruction is told in terms suited to the meanest capacity ; but when the operation begins of describing the fresh fabric which has been

erected on the old site, or detailing the manner in which the desolated country has been drained and recultivated, the true difficulty is discovered. Thus, while almost any one can point out what is defective or incomplete in the Indian system, comparatively few persons are disposed to consider what is essentially excellent in it; and still fewer seem to be aware of the progress which has been made, and is still going forward, in this course of improvement.

As Hyder, then, was an admirable soldier, and never permitted more mischief to be done when laying waste a country than was strictly useful, in a military point of view, to the purposes of the campaign, he did not burn or destroy the whole territory of the Lower Carnatic, from whence, chiefly, his supplies were drawn. He calculated that a considerable interval of time must elapse before the operations of the war, and the aid of his dear friends the French, should put him in possession of Fort George at Madras. Round this centre of British power, including, as far as he could, its maritime communications also, he drew a broad line of merciless desolation, marked, as Mr. Wilks graphically tells us, by the continuous blaze of flaming towns and villages. "He directed the indiscriminate mutilation of every human being who should linger near the ashes, in disobedience of the mandate for instant emigration, accompanied by all their flocks and herds; thus consigning to the exclusive dominion of the beasts of the forest the desert which he interposed between himself and his enemies. This line extended inland from thirty to fifty-five miles, according to circumstances. Round Vellore, also, he drew a similar circle. Black columns of smoke were everywhere in view, from St. Thomas's Mount, distant only nine miles from Madras, before an order was issued for the movement of a single English soldier!"

When, at last, the Madras government took alarm, and the British troops were put in motion, they performed no great service; and the commander-in-chief, Sir Hector Monro, after the fatal defeat of Colonel Baillie, retreated towards Madras, which he reached on the 15th September, after an inglorious campaign of three weeks, almost every day of which was marked by some mischance or humiliation. Meanwhile, Hyder lay couched up, ready for a spring, in his fortified camp, about forty miles off; and there can be no doubt, that if affairs had been allowed to remain much longer in the management of the same hands at Madras, the result, for the time at all events, must have proved fatal to the British power in Southern India. The influence of a master-mind, however, was preparing to put itself into action, before which even the powerful genius of Hyder and his victorious hosts were made to bend, and eventually to break. It seems now pretty clear that, under the very peculiar circumstances of the case, both as to external relations and to the distracted state of our Indian councils, consequent chiefly upon the defective nature of their construction, any governor-general less energetic than Warren Hastings—who has so justly been called the political saviour of India—could scarcely have rescued the sinking state. This distinguished governor possessed, in a very eminent degree, many of the qualities of a great commander, and amongst these, the valuable faculty of discriminating character. He showed this by at once applying to Sir Eyre Coote, who, though advanced in years and infirm in health, proved himself the only man then in the field competent to vindicate in his own person the rights and honour of the British arms. Coote was then commander-in-chief in India, and member of the supreme council in Bengal; but he agreed, at the suggestion of Mr. Hastings, to proceed to Madras to repel the invasion of Hyder. The governor-general took care that he should carry with him two very efficient means of accomplishing this difficult purpose: one was a well-filled money-chest, together with a large detachment of European infantry and artillery, besides a considerable force of native troops; the other consisted of a decree by which the supreme council at Calcutta suspended the governor of Madras. These measures placed the chief authority in the hands of Sir Eyre Coote, who thus held, by right of his instructions, complete command of all the resources of the presidency.

It grieves me to hurry through the account of the momentous period in which the mighty game of Eastern empire was played by men who knew the moves right well. The war raged not only on shore but at sea. The naval actions between Suffrein and Sir Edward Hughes off Trincomalee, and subsequently off Madras, form good companions to the great land battle of Porto Novo, and the hard fight, but dubious victory of Pollilore. The details of all these engagements are singularly instructive to professional men. The ups and downs, too, of the arduous contest, considered in their civil relations as affecting the power of the East India Company, are not less curious; and though apparently complicated, they will all be found to turn upon a few simple positions. Be this as it may, Madras, in the autumn of 1782, was reduced to very great distress, even in spite of the great successes of Sir Eyre Coote, who, at last, almost worn out with the intense labours of the field, had been obliged to return to Bengal. Nothing could be more gloomy than the British prospects at that moment, when the political horizon was suddenly cleared up by the death of their formidable enemy Hyder Ali—assuredly the greatest warrior of modern India, and the monarch who has tried the strength of the English more severely than any other native authority in the East. All his resistance, however, only contributed, in the end, to consolidate the empire of his foes, and by sharpening their swords, and teaching them how to use their resources, and in whom to confide, contributed essentially to rivet that foreign influence upon his own country, and many an adjacent state, which he spent his long and active life in manfully endeavouring to counteract.

CHAPTER IV.

THE INDIAN ADMINISTRATION OF WARREN HASTINGS—SKETCH OF MR. PITT'S INDIA BILL—ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BOARD OF CONTROL.—ITS OBJECT, AND ITS PRACTICAL WORKINGS.

THE course of nature having thus co-operated with the fortune of arms to relieve the presidency from the dread of actual conquest, these advantages might easily have been followed up with every

chance of success, had not the dissensions in the local government of Madras well-nigh ruined the British cause in that quarter of India. Meanwhile the faithful adherents of Hyder having, for wise and statesmanlike purposes, adopted the singular resolution of concealing his death, they managed to continue the exercise of his royal authority for very nearly four weeks, if not without suspicion, at all events without palpable detection. The object of this concealment was to give time for the new sultan Tippoo to come over from the Malabar coast, on the western side of India, and also to prevent the tumults which it was feared might be excited amongst the soldiers in the camp if it was known that their leader was dead. The manner in which this concealment was effected is described by Wilks, in his History of Mysore, and is highly characteristic of the native manners. Tippoo reached the army before any serious disturbances took place. Of course he pretended to be overwhelmed with grief; but, at all events, with or without sorrow, he felt so firmly seated on the throne, that he lost no time in following up the laudable designs of his parent, and, in conjunction with his allies the French, set merrily about expelling the English. At this time Tippoo possessed nearly ninety thousand men in the field, exclusive of garrisons and provincial troops; while in his treasury at Seringapatam he reckoned three crores of rupees, or about three millions sterling, besides an immense accumulation of jewels and other valuables, the plunder of numberless provinces well swept over by the marauding troops of his father.

Before taking a glance—and it must be only a glance—at the operations of Tippoo in furtherance of the darling object of his dynasty—the destruction of the English—a project which ended in his death and the entire political extinction of his line, it may not be amiss to take a peep at the derangements in the machinery of the English administration, by means of which chiefly Hyder had been able to make such alarming progress in his designs against us.

About the year 1773, the East India Company's affairs having fallen into embarrassments, they petitioned Government for pecuniary aid. This was granted; but the House of Commons made an inquiry upon the occasion, which was followed be an act of the legislature materially changing the government of the East India Company's affairs, both abroad and at home. The principal changes were, first, that the Court of Directors at home should be elected for four years, instead of being chosen annually, six members each year. Secondly, that the qualification of stock should be £1000, instead of £500 for one vote, £3000 for two votes, £6000 for three votes. Thirdly, that in lieu of the mayor's courts formerly established at Calcutta, whose jurisdiction extended to small mercantile causes, a supreme court of judicature should be appointed by the crown, consisting of a chief judge and three puisne judges, possessed of extended powers, both civil and criminal, over the subjects of England, their servants and dependants, residing within the Company's territories in Bengal. Lastly, a governor-general was to be appointed to Fort William, (Calcutta,) together with four councillors, and vested with full powers over the other presidencies. When any differences occurred, the opinion of the majority in council was to be decisive. This board were required to transmit reports to the Directors, who in their turn were directed to furnish copies to his majesty's secretaries of state, to whom also they were to send copies of all rules and ordinations, and if these were disapproved by his majesty, the orders were to become null and void.

This act appointed WARREN HASTINGS, Esq., governor-general; John Clavering, Esq., Hon. George Monson, Richard Barwell, Esq., and Philip Francis, Esq., the first four councillors.

To explain the radical objections which might be made to the theory of this construction of the East India Company's government, would occupy a needless degree of time and space. It may suffice to mention what occurred in practice. The king's ministry being vested with a power of interference, but being charged with no responsibility, were released from those salutary checks by which even the very best public men are kept right. Their favour and aid became indispensable to the governor-general; and, in order to secure these, it was soon found of use to advance the friends of the minister of the crown, as well as those of the Direction. Thus the patronage of the governor-general in the East was almost necessarily regulated by the will of the ministry at home; and, as ministers were liable to frequent change, the fluctuations which in consequence took place became the sources of endless corruption, and abuses of every description in India. Those were the days when the far-famed pagoda-tree grew and flourished—or rather, when the persons who lived under its shade flourished by the golden shower which they rained down upon themselves by shaking its branches. Such historians as delight in holding up the East India Company to the scorn of the country, and are all unmindful of the good they have done in later years to repair these enormities, make out a famous case of plunder and misrule, about the middle of the last century, and number in their lists of delinquents some names of high celebrity. Let that pass. The system in itself was so essentially bad, that Warren Hastings, instead of having the comparatively easy task which now falls to a governor-general, who possesses the same responsibility, but is surrounded by men of high talents and high principles, was obliged to conduct his government with the servants he found there; and, in order to stir them, he required, of necessity, to put in action those moving powers by which alone the wheels of government could then be made to go round at all.

I have no intention to give even the slightest sketch of the administration of Hastings, which lasted from the year 1772 to 1785. It required, as every one knows, the almost undivided attention of Burke, and some others of the keenest spirits of the age, for a period of seven years, to render the details of Hastings' government at all intelligible to the country. The real good, however, which this celebrated trial brought about, was not exactly what those statesmen who originated the investigation had chiefly in their view. Their purpose was to bring to justice a man whom they conceived to be a great public delinquent. But each year, each day—I may assert each hour, of the inquiry only tended to prove not merely the purity of purpose in the object of this furious party attack,

but to show the transcendent ability with which the administration of Warren Hastings had been conducted. Colonel Wilks, one of the best historians of the East, says, with his accustomed eloquence, "The saviour of India—a title conferred upon this great man by the general voice of civilised Europe—became the convenient sacrifice to political manœuvre; a trial of seven years' duration (Feb. 1788 to April 1795) terminated in his honourable acquittal at the bar of his country, of every accusation with which his character had been blackened. To the charge of oppression, a universal people made answer with their astonishment, their blessings, and their prayers. To the crime of receiving corrupt presents and clandestine extortions equal to the price of a kingdom, he answered with poverty; and, to the accusation of his violating his duty to the East India Company and his country, was offered the simple fact of preserving unimpaired the territories committed to his charge during a period which elsewhere exhibited nothing but national humiliation."

This is the report of a friendly chronicler. On the other hand, Mr. Mill, the depth and extent of whose historical researches, and boundless industry in arranging and elucidating his materials, are beyond all praise, takes a very different view of Mr. Hastings' administration. In winding up his narrative, however, he pays the governor-general the following rather equivocal compliment, which I dare say made old Hastings himself smile when he read it—for this great and excellent man lived long after all his political trials were over, and enjoyed that cheerful and serene old age which belongs only to a clear conscience. The historian declares "his firm conviction, that if we had the same advantage with respect to other men who have been as much engaged in the conduct of public affairs as Warren Hastings, and could view their conduct as completely naked and stripped of all its disguises, few of them would be found whose character would present a higher claim to indulgence than his. In point of ability," adds the candid writer, "he is, beyond all question, the most eminent of the chief rulers whom the Company have ever employed; nor is there any one of them who would not have succumbed under the difficulties which, if he did not overcome, he at any rate sustained. He had that great art, also, of a ruler, which consists in attaching to the governor those who are governed. His administration assuredly was popular both with his countrymen and the natives of Bengal."—*Mill*, 3d ed. vol. iv. p. 454.

When we recollect how recently the book I quote from was published, and that in the above comparison must necessarily be included Lord Cornwallis and Lord Wellesley, the friends of Mr. Hastings may be well content that his memory should share the obloquy when coupled with the praise which attaches to such companionship.

But the effect of the inquiries of those days, or of the laborious researches of modern times, on the individual character of any public man, was manifestly of very minor importance, compared to the advantage to be derived from the insight thus afforded into the very heart of the East India system of government. "This system," observes Sir John Malcolm, "corrupt and inefficient as it was, might have long continued, had not an unwearied spirit of investigation dragged the voluminous records of the Company into light, with the view of criminating their principal agents. These attacks and their consequent reports disseminated among all classes a general knowledge of the affairs of the Company."—*Malcolm's Political History, Introduction, p.* 41.

The real advantage of such knowledge consisted in the power, or rather the sanction, which it gave to government to introduce measures for ameliorating the system. The temptations were still so great to continue many old practices then almost avowedly corrupt, that nothing short of the resistless force of public opinion, directed by the most accurate oral and documentary information, would have proved sufficient to bring about the reform, both of principle and of conduct, now so loudly called for. It was, indeed, to be expected that very violent discussions would ensue; but all these only contributed to the establishment of a course of administration such as the East had never known before.

Without going into details, it may well be considered a deplorable state of things when it becomes necessary for any purpose to place the government of a country, as it were, in arrest, and to send another officer to do the duty. This occurred when Mr. Hastings was obliged to direct Sir Eyre Coote to conduct the war in the Carnatic, independently of the authority of the local government. Besides, an officer so highly gifted as Sir Eyre Coote is not always at hand to conduct a campaign. Be that as it may, there can be no doubt at all that the furious and indecent altercations which took place at the supreme council-board of Calcutta, contributed materially to clog the wheels of government. The structure of the Indian administration, under the act of 1773, was such, that the governor-general might often be placed in circumstances which deprived him of all power. This, in fact, did actually occur in the case of Mr. Hastings, who, for a considerable period in the early stages of his administration, being left in a minority in the council, was absolutely prevented from acting in the manner he knew to be most for the public interests. The responsibility of the governor-general was thus entirely frittered away; and, what was worse still, the councils of the government became so uncertain, and their measures so fluctuating, that the confidence of the natives, and of all others whom it concerned, were essentially weakened. When a member of the hostile majority in the council died, or went home on account of ill health or from any other cause, the governor-general recovered his power, and set to work in his own way; but anon, when a new member was appointed to the council—if he chanced to take a different view from that of the governor-general—all he had done was pulled to pieces. Thus the individuals forming the supreme government of India passed great part of their time in thwarting one another, in adopting, as each gained the ascendancy, totally different lines of policy, and in writing home myriads of angry paragraphs against their colleagues. These disputes, as may well be believed, too often assumed a personal turn; and at length a duel took place between Mr. Hastings and his chief antagonist in the council, Mr. Francis,

afterwards Sir Philip Francis, the reputed author of Junius's Letters.

All this was bad enough ; but perhaps the evils arising out of such disjointed responsibility and systematic counteraction amongst the members of the council, were not greater than those which arose from the pretensions of the supreme court of judicature established by the same unfortunate act of 1773. Its jurisdiction was probably intended to be very limited in its operation ; but the judges took upon them to assume, under its letter, a degree of authority which actually outrivalled that of the supreme government, and speedily threw the natives into complete bewilderment. The Parliament who passed the act, of course, anticipated nothing of this kind, and never dreamed of establishing two rival co-ordinate British powers in India. It would be tedious to enumerate the cases in which they thwarted the executive, and actually prevented the machine of government from moving ; but it is quite clear, that the perverse measures of the supreme court, had they been allowed to go on, would have rendered the collection of the revenue in India totally impossible. Had the hands of Mr. Hastings not been tied up by the circumstance of his being frequently left in a minority in the council, there can be no doubt, judging from what he afterwards effected, that he would soon have counteracted these monstrous evils.

In truth, however, the entire correction of such defects, like those arising out of the abuse of patronage already referred to, and the custom, then almost universal, of receiving presents, in other words, bribes from the natives, lay beyond the reach even of the great ability and zeal of Hastings. He had not the power, though he possessed the will, to apply the remedy ; and as all this had now become evident to the British public, in consequence chiefly of the alarming proceedings of Hyder in overrunning the Carnatic, a loud outcry was very naturally and properly raised for some change in a system which had led to such deplorable results.

All reflecting persons of experience in England saw and acknowledged that India could no longer be retained by the methods which had sufficed to hold it as a mere trading station, and that if we had any expectation of being able to cope with such powerful men as Hyder, backed by such allies as the French, a new organisation must take place, which should afford a bounty upon character, and render a sense of duty paramount to motives of pecuniary interest. It seemed quite clear, at all events, that the old system could not work much longer ; and the extraordinary events of Mr. Hastings' administration having brought the whole subject to light, and betrayed the evils it involved, Pitt, Fox, Burke, Dundas, and many others—the able statesmen of that day—considered it not unworthy of their talents to grapple with this complicated problem.

The extensive parliamentary inquiries and reports of 1783 paved the way for the subsequent important improvements made in the mode of conducting the East India Company's affairs. It was allowed by most people, both of those who had considered the subject for themselves, and those who took their opinions at second-hand, or who judged merely by the results, that a more efficient and energetic local government was required ; and that, if we wished to correct the gross abuses of the existing system, a responsibility more defined, and practically more operative on all parties, than that established by the bill of 1773, had become absolutely indispensable. But there soon appeared a wide difference of opinion in the House of Commons regarding the nature of the checks by which official men in India were to be restrained from getting on too fast, and the motives by which they were to be urged forward. Mr. Dundas, at length, brought forward a bill, the chief novelty of which was the proposal to appoint a governor-general and captain-general, who should exercise in his own person complete civil and military authority and control over British India. This high public officer was to be approved, but not nominated, by the crown, by whom alone, however, he could be removed. It was also proposed, that his majesty's ministers should receive copies of all despatches. This bill did not succeed, but it gave rise to one of a character nearly similar, which was introduced and carried through by Mr. Pitt in the next session. As Mr. Pitt's bill, however, owed its success very much to the feelings and opinions set afloat in the country by the agitation of another plan brought forward about the same time by his great political rival, Mr. Fox, it will render matters much clearer, and more easily understood, to glance first at that measure.

Mr. Fox proposed two bills ; one calculated to regulate the home or domestic concerns, the other the foreign government of the Company. Their preamble stated, that disorders of an alarming nature and magnitude provailed in British India—that the natives were reduced to great distress—and that the public interests were in danger of being ruined. As a remedy for these evils, Mr. Fox proposed that the whole power should be transferred, for four years, to seven directors or commissioners, to be aided by nine assistant directors. By these bills, the power of the governor-general was to be of a very different nature from that suggested by Mr. Dundas : in fact, the principles were directly opposite in the two cases. By extending the authority, Mr. Dundas judiciously thought to extend the responsibility of the chief governor, but at the same time he took care to fix it more certainly on his shoulders. He defended this measure by saying, most truly, that there was fully as much reason to apprehend the introduction of arbitrary measures when the management of affairs was vested in two or more persons, than when freely intrusted to one. But Mr. Fox, in his constitutional jealousy of power, proceeded on a totally different idea ; and by tying up the hands of the governor-general as much as possible, essentially diminished, or rather dissipated, that responsibility which affords the best security for good and faithful public service.

It was declared by Mr. Fox's bills, that the powers of the governor-general in council should, on no occasion, be delegated to that officer alone, or to any person or persons whatever ; while the governor-general in council—that is, acting together—were restricted, as much as possible, but particularly in the case of making war. These provisions were avowedly proposed to remedy evils incident to the administration of Mr. Hastings,

who, when he visited the upper provinces, had obtained from the council a delegation of their full authority. Most wisely, indeed, had that authority been given; for without it, as all experience has shown, he could have done nothing useful.

The governor-general was also declared by Mr. Fox's proposed measure not to have the power of entering or invading, with an armed force, the dominion of any prince of India, except upon intelligence, the credibility of which was to be admitted, and individually recorded, by the majority of the members of the council, that such prince was about to make war on the Company or their allies. He was not to be permitted, without orders from the commissioners at home, to enter into any offensive alliance for sharing any country between the Company and a native prince; nor was he to hire out any troops, European or native, in any Indian state. No presents were to be taken, even for the use of the Company. This was another hit at Hastings, who, with great judgment and propriety, had employed money gratuitously given by the native authorities in furtherance of the Company's objects. Finally, all monopolies were to be abolished amongst private traders.

These formed the leading provisions of Mr. Fox's celebrated measure, which passed, with a great majority, in the House of Commons, but was thrown out by the House of Lords; and, after a series of the most extraordinary discussions which have ever taken place in England between the crown and the parliament, the struggle terminated in the retirement of that statesman and his party from office. Mr. Fox's proposal, it must be borne in mind, was merely a temporary expedient; and what might have been the ultimate arrangement, it is difficult to say, though it seems probable that the Company never could have regained their authority. The suspicious policy of multiplying the checks on the local governments of India, and thus diminishing their power, in the vain expectation of rendering them more responsible, was grounded on a complete forgetfulness of the high duties which they were called upon to execute. It took no account of the utter impossibility of appealing in time to the distant authorities at home, —who at best could not be one hundredth part so well informed as efficient and responsible observers on the spot—nor of the unspeakable complication and multitude of details which could be understood only by persons in India. The discussion now took the character of a violent political contest; and the right of regulating the Company's affairs became an object of public rivalry between the two great parties of the day, which were then nearly balanced. At last the scale was turned by what may be called a coalition between Mr. Pitt and the Company, who, though originally and still adverse to any interference in their concerns, naturally chose that side which promised to be the least unfavourable to their established rights and privileges.

Mr. Pitt's bill was passed in 1784, and four other acts, explanatory of it, in 1786; besides which, another very important bill was passed in 1788, declaratory of the intentions of Mr. Pitt's first bill. Various alterations have since been made, but the constitution of the government, as far as relates to Indian affairs, rests at this time substantially on the legislative measures and explanations above cited, which were more fully established, and condensed into specific acts of parliament, when the charter was renewed in 1793 and 1813.

By these celebrated enactments a certain number of his majesty's privy council are to be named commissioners for the affairs of India, of whom one of his majesty's secretaries of state is president. These commissioners, who are appointed by his majesty and removable at his pleasure, are vested with a control and superintendence over all civil, military, and revenue officers of the Company, and hence their name, "Board of Control." The Court of East India directors are obliged to lay before this Board all papers relative to the management of their possessions, and to obey all orders received from them on points connected with the civil or military government, or with the revenue, of their territories in India. The Board of Control, on their part, are obliged to return the copies of papers which they have received from the directors in fourteen days, with their approbation, or else to state at large their reasons for disapproving of them. These despatches, so approved or amended, are then sent to India by the Court of Directors, unless they should think fit to make any further representations to the Board of Control.

In the practice of business, when the question under consideration is one of importance, the chairman or deputy-chairman of the Court of Directors, or both, meet the president of the Board of Control, and discuss, "vivâ voce," the views which have suggested themselves to his majesty's government. When all the points of difference have been fully considered, and the conclusions agreed upon, the despatches are framed accordingly. Generally speaking, the following is the usual course adopted. The Court of Directors, acting upon their communications from India, relating to the political, revenue, judicial, public, military, and financial affairs of the Company, order the officer whose duty it is, to prepare the answer. This officer calls upon his assistants to make what is called "a collection," which comprises all matters relating to the despatch to be answered, which is always replied to paragraph by paragraph, according to the principle laid down by the Court of Directors and the Board of Control. The officer who prepares this answer communicates with the "Chairs," and takes their directions upon points connected with it. When the draft is fully prepared, it is laid by the chairman before the committee of correspondence. This is the regular and formal manner in which every despatch is first prepared, though, as I have already mentioned, "previous communications" frequently take place between the Chairs and the Board of Control regarding important despatches, prior to their being laid before the committee of correspondence. At these conferences no one, as I understand, is present except the president of the Board and the chairman and deputy-chairman of the Court of Directors.

Supposing the draft of the despatch to have passed regularly through the Court of Directors, it is then signed officially by their secretary, and sent up to the Board of Control. If the draft is returned by the Board approved, a formal de-

spatch is drawn up, and sent out to India at once. But if the Board do not approve of parts of the draft, they return it to the Court of Directors, with alterations, which are made in red ink, by striking out some parts and adding to others, with a letter explanatory of the Board's reasons for making such changes. The Court, however, are authorised to address a representation to the Board upon these alterations. But in the event of the Board of Control not being satisfied with the reasons adduced by the Court of Directors against the proposed omissions or additions, the Board communicate their unaltered opinion to the Court, and at the same time desire that the draft, as returned by them, may be forthwith framed into a despatch, and forwarded to India, agreeably to the provisions of the act of parliament. These orders are final and conclusive upon the Court, although, in extreme cases, if the Directors are strongly opposed to the measures suggested by the Board, or believe that the Board has exceeded its powers, they may appeal to the king in council, who decides whether the alterations fall within the province of the Board. If that decision is in the affirmative, a mandamus may be moved for to compel the Court of Directors to sign and forward such despatches. In practice, however, recourse has very seldom been had to this step ; and though differences of opinion between the Court and the Board are frequent, they almost invariably terminate in a mutual agreement. The public objects of the Board of Control and the Court of Directors being so obviously and essentially the same, a great degree of cordiality has at all times prevailed. Serious differences of opinion, leading to delay, and to troublesome discussions, it is true, have occasionally arisen ; but, upon the whole, these have been of wonderfully rare occurence.

There is, no doubt, a great advantage in having two sets of hands through which every despatch must pass ; for it establishes a continued system of vigilant checks mutually acting and reacting upon each other. On one side is the Court of Directors—the primary and executive body—composed of professed men of business, most of whom have been in India, or who, at all events, have been long schooled in Indian topics. By the constitution of their corporation, also, they are not liable to fluctuation by political changes in the state, and they include all parties. They are therefore sure of continuing in the exercise of the government of India, whatever side may be in power. This permanency in office—modified only by the annual change of one-fourth of their numbers, in rotation, amongst themselves—secures a degree of uniformity to their administration, which is absolutely indispensable in the management of such an empire as that of India. On the other hand, the Board of Control is merely a branch of his majesty's general government for the time being, well acquainted with the spirit which actuates the administration of the day. And as they are influenced by strong motives of public policy, they naturally seek to impart to the government of India as much of the spirit of their own party as may be consistent with the correct working of the vast system established in the East. The Directors, again, knowing this, will, of course, make due allowance for such feelings, and endeavour, as far as they can, to meet the views of government. In practice, too, they will be more careful in framing the drafts of their despatches than if they had to pass under no eyes but their own. For similar reasons, the President of the Board will be cautious how he interferes with the details of Indian affairs, from knowing that if his suggestions are not judicious and well weighed, they will be sure to attract the critical notice of experienced men at the India House, to the manifest discredit of his majesty's government, of which, it will be recollected, he is a cabinet minister.

The Court of Directors, it will be seen, then, have no power given them to send out any orders whatsoever without the sanction of the Board of Control. But that Board is authorised to send orders from themselves to any of the presidencies of India, in the event of the Directors neglecting to send out true copies of the despatches mutually agreed upon between them ; while, if the Board of Control forward any orders to the directors on points not relating to the government of India, the directors may appeal. In all cases of secrecy, and particularly such as relate to war or peace with the native powers of India, the Board have the power of sending their orders to the local governments of India, through a secret committee of the Court of Directors.

By Mr. Pitt's bill, the chief government of India was made to consist of a governor-general and three councillors, the commander-in-chief of the forces having a voice in the council next to the governor-general ; but he was not to succeed to the chief authority, unless it were specially so ordered by the directors. The governments of the presidencies of Madras and Bombay were similarly constituted, but both were placed completely under the rule of the governor-general in council, on all points connected with any negotiations carried on with the native powers, or relating to peace or war, and to the application of their revenues and forces. The King was to have a right to recall any governor-general, or any officer of the Company, from India ; and if, within two months, the Court of Directors did not fill up the vacancy, the crown became possessed of the nomination.

The difference between the bills proposed by Mr. Fox and Mr. Pitt consisted chiefly in the following points :—that of Mr. Fox took away the commerce entirely from the Company ; it abolished the Court of Directors, and deprived the Company of every appointment, civil, military, and commercial, both at home and abroad, vesting the whole patronage in the new commissioners. Mr. Pitt's bill left the commerce, and the whole of the patronage, with the Company. Mr. Fox's bill abrogated all the Company's rights, and well nigh confiscated all their property. Mr. Pitt's measure deviated only so much from their charter as was absolutely necessary, and, while he did not take away the government of India from the Company, he secured to the constitutional executive of the mother country a direct and efficient superintendence over the political affairs of India, by placing them under the control of a branch of the general government of the empire. Mr. Fox's commissioners, on the other hand, were not to be dependent at all upon his majesty's ministers, nor to hold any communication with them ! Thus a complete "imperium in imperio" would have

been erected, possessed of powers and influence well calculated to have involved England in war with any of the European states connected with India, without even the knowledge of his majesty's government.

In 1786, as I have already mentioned, several explanatory acts were passed. The appointment of the commander-in-chief as member of council at the presidencies, was made optional, not obligatory; and the Directors were vested with the power of appointing the commander-in-chief in India governor-general, and of making the commander-in-chief at Madras and Bombay president of those settlements. But by far the most important enactment, and one which has given more life and true vigour to the Indian administration than all those acts put together, was a clause in one of the explanatory bills of that year (and since confirmed by the acts of 1793 and 1813) by which the governor-general, and the governors of Madras and Bombay, were vested with a discretionary right of acting, in extraordinary cases, without the concurrence of their councils, being held solely and personally responsible for any consequences which might ensue from the measures adopted under such circumstances.

This extension of their powers was dictated by true political wisdom; and so far from the latitude which it gives for the undivided exercise of authority being calculated to injure the cause of freedom and virtue, it manifestly affords the securest guarantee which human institutions can possibly supply for the honourable discharge of public duty. What mind of any power or of any generous aspirations can be expected to act effectively in stations of high command, if its operations, though commenced in the spirit of the most comprehensive policy, are to be checked in their progress by the idle fears or the factious obstructions of inferior intellects? Accordingly, in looking back at different parts of our Indian history, we see that when such men as Hastings, or Clive, or Coote, were entangled with the clogs of stupid or perverse colleagues, they could not—even if they would—have put forth their gigantic powers. It would, probably, have been just the same even with Cornwallis or Wellesley, had they been similarly cramped. Men in such high and responsible stations require, at all hazards, to be possessed of the power to act freely and independently; and though, in practice, the privilege certainly need not often be called forth, the knowledge that it exists, though in a latent state, must prove eminently conducive to the vigorous course of political action, especially in a country so remote as India. Can it be believed, for example, that if Warren Hastings had possessed such an authority, his council would ever have dreamed of pushing the office of governor-general so completely on one side as they frequently did? Would it not then have been the interest of his assistant councillors, as it always was their duty, to have studied to agree with the governor-general, instead of studying, as they too often appear to have done, how they could most effectually thwart him! All parties, I believe, are now agreed as to the wisdom of this new regulation; but at the time it was, of course, vehemently resisted by Burke, Francis, and other party men who opposed Warren Hastings.

Mr. Pitt's act of 1784 was avowedly temporary; but under the various important modifications of 1786, 1793, and 1813, it has been acted upon ever since. His attention seems to have been directed rather to the correction of grievous abuses, the regulation of power, and the salutary appropriation of responsibility, than to the complete removal even of admitted evils, or the actual introduction of a system theoretically perfect. He seems to have proceeded steadily on the plan of maintaining and practically amending the long-established constitution of the Company, which he was far from wishing to abolish. It is supposed, indeed, that, on principle, he preferred sacrificing a good deal of the efficiency of his new measure, to disturbing rudely the forms of the old system. In this the minister's sagacity and knowledge of business became very conspicuous. As no statesman knew better than Pitt the absence of necessary connexion between innovation and improvement, he invariably began by respecting on its own account, as a matter of course, whatever was established. He then set about such modifications as he conceived might produce the least change possible—consistent with those improvements which were deemed advisable, but always scrupulously respecting, as far as he could, whatever had gained stability by prescription.

Before taking a final leave of these discussions relative to the structure of the East India Company's government, it may possibly be considered useful, by those to whom this subject is quite new, to revert for a moment to the rationale of one of the most important of all the changes introduced by Mr. Pitt: for to it, probably, more than to any other cause, may be traced the astonishing success which has ever since attended the administration of our East Indian Government. I allude to the establishment of the Board of Control, by means of which a most material revolution was effected in the affairs of the Company. For the first time in their history, it made their Court of Directors dependent upon the king's ministry—in other words, it incorporated the government of India with the general government of the British empire. This, as might be expected, was then much cavilled at, and has been not a little censured since; but, as I conceive, without any good reason. It was said, that so long as the government of India was independent, the ministers of the crown had no immediate interest in hiding its defects; and it was also asserted, that the directors and their servants, from not possessing this screen, were formerly exposed to the wholesome jealousy of parliament. But surely the facts do not bear out this view of the matter; for few will be confident enough to say, that India has occupied less of the public vigilance since 1784 than it did antecedent to that period. That there should exist, in point of fact, two separate powers in the same empire, one of which should reign in the West, and the other in the East, seems a gross absurdity in the politics of one state. The flagrant abuses of the Indian system in all its parts—the pitiable inefficiency of the local administrations in those days—the absence of high principle in the local management of their acquired territories—the profligacy of their dealings with the natives, and, generally speaking, the absence of that enduring and habitual good faith which is the true foundation of public

honour—as sound religious principle is the foundation of every virtue—were all features essentially characterising our Oriental history up to the date of the busy and important administration of Warren Hastings. That eminent benefactor of his country, and true friend to the natives of India, first pointed out the way to better things; and if he could not himself clear up the confusion, or entirely counteract the evils, he at all events placed the real state of affairs, good and bad, so distinctly before his country, that there required only the herculean mind of Pitt to accomplish the practical remedy.

This great minister saw that by linking indissolubly the government of British India with the government of the empire at large, or, in other words, by rendering Hindustan an integral part of the state, and thus engrafting it on the parent stem, it would, by partaking of the same circulation, possess the same vigour in all its ramifications, and yield the same fruit as the original from which it sprang. It was objected to the arrangement of Pitt, at the time the measure for establishing the Board of Control was first passed, that it would extinguish all the useful power of the Court of Directors as an efficient public body. But the result has proved quite the reverse. It ought, indeed, to be always borne in mind as a matter of hope to those who are alarmed at all changes, as well as of warning to those who love mere innovation, that the consequences of any great political measure almost invariably turn out very different from what either its abettors or its opposers predict will follow. In practice, it has happened that the influence of the Company in both houses of parliament, and in the country generally, has uniformly supported their authority in Leadenhall Street. Their political power, no doubt, has seemed to fluctuate with the changing degree of strength in the king's government; but the probability is, that this has been merely relative, and that, while their administration has remained pretty uniform, the influence of the crown has varied.

It is certainly consonant to the soundest principles of political discipline, that his majesty's government—who alone are strictly responsible to the country—should exercise an influence no less direct and constant over the Indian councils, than over every other branch of public affairs. On the same principle, the Directors at home, as well as their delegated governors abroad, should be forced to feel that this control is effective and permanent, and its scrutiny complete. By this means the responsibility, at all times and under all circumstances, will eventually rest in one superior quarter—that is, with the cabinet ministers of his majesty.

In the debates which took place in the House of Commons in 1788, when Pitt's bill declaratory of the meaning of this part of the enactment of 1784 was passed, the view just taken of the measure seems to have been generally understood. The minister, at all events, boldly and wisely avowed that such was his purpose, by declaring that the grand intention of the act of 1784 had been essentially to transfer the government of India from the Court of Directors to the ministry. Mr. Dundas, then president of the Board of Control, followed up this declaration by contending, that unless his majesty's ministers possessed the whole powers of government, the Board of Control would be a nugatory institution.

It has been asked, however, "If the whole powers of government were necessary for the Board of Control, what use was there for another governing body, such as the Court of Directors, without power? This was to have two governing bodies, the one real, the other only in show." But surely this is not a fair view of the case. It is not necessary, because his majesty's government possess the power of interference, that they should interfere so far with the details as entirely to supersede the Court of Directors as an executive administration regulating the affairs of India. The analogy of the Admiralty will make this matter clear. His majesty's ministers possess the undoubted power of governing the movements of the navy—they direct fleets and squadrons to be sent here and there; but is it on this account to be said that the Admiralty exercise no power in the administration of the navy? and that they exist merely for show? The case of India is indeed vastly greater in extent, but the principle is the same in both. His majesty's government could no more attend to all the details of Indian affairs than they could attend to all the technical details of the fleet. But, as it is indispensable to the effective government of the country at large that the ministry should be held responsible both for the Indian government and that of the navy, a cabinet minister is made First Lord of the Admiralty, while another is appointed President of the Board of Control—one may be called the secretary of state for the Navy, the other secretary of state for India.

Meanwhile the Court of Directors ought to be, and in practice generally is, composed of men obviously the most competent by talents, experience, and character, to conduct the complicated affairs of the vast empire under their command; and these gentlemen, in point of fact, do carry on all the details of the business. The Board of Control, on the other hand, forms the connecting link by which a salutary communication is maintained between the East India Company and the supreme Government of the country, and through them the parliament and the nation at large are kept sufficiently informed of what is going on. Through the Court, also, any political impulse may be propagated which it is considered may prove beneficial to the general interests of the empire, but of which they only can be competent judges on whom the responsibility rests of conducting the whole government of the country, and with whom alone can be found the degree of knowledge requisite to render such interference otherwise than mischievous. Indeed, when we consider how very large a portion of the resources of England may be said to circulate through India, we may conceive how fatal it might prove, not only to the welfare of that distant region, but also to the parent state, if the affairs of either country were conducted without reference to the interests of the other. It seems quite obvious, therefore, that if the machinery devised by Pitt, which had for its object this mutual communication between these two great parts of the British empire, has been found efficient for that important purpose—and experience amply shows that it

has proved so—we may safely leave the theoretical evils of many of its details to be mangled by the ingenious sophistry of those "doctrinaires" who deny the influence of genuine public spirit, and laud to the skies those verbal checks and counter-checks on human action, which imply that as no public man is worthy of trust, all persons in office ought to be treated as if their motives were selfish and dishonourable.

In how very different a light did Burke view these things! "There is," says he, with beautiful delicacy of discrimination, "a confidence necessary to human intercourse, and without which men are often more injured by their own suspicions than they could be by the perfidy of others." Now the business-like and practical genius of Pitt, improving on this cheerful view of our nature, took a still wider range. He, of course, knew mankind vastly too well to fancy that he could make any system of government perfect. But he knew equally well, that he must gain the best chance for success by trusting to those generous and manly principles, which presuppose that high talents, coupled with extensive experience, and graced by reputation earned by real services, if fully confided in, will furnish an infinitely better security for the effective and honest performance of official duties, than all the ingenious contrivances by which short-sighted reasoners expect to convert the perversities of our nature into benefits, or seek to restrain the evil dispositions of unprincipled men by mere technical forms and regulations. The truth is, Pitt saw that it had become absolutely necessary for the political regeneration of India, that its affairs should be managed in the same temper and spirit as the rest of the British empire; and, to bring this about, it was necessary to dovetail its administration firmly into that of his majesty's government. At the same time he saw and felt, as strongly as any man could do, the necessity of leaving the actual conduct of affairs in the East, as much as was possible consistently with this union, and due subordination, in the hands of the local governments abroad. He wished the servants of the East India Company to act, generally speaking, under the instructions of their own Court of Directors, and to be subject to no more interference on the part of the king's ministry than might be thought absolutely necessary, from time to time, to preserve the requisite degree of uniformity throughout all parts of the public administration of affairs; India, in that view, being considered merely a part of the grand whole.

In the spirit of an enlarged political philosophy, this genuine statesman's maxim was, that the servants of the East India Company abroad, both civil and military, who were, by the new act, positively forbidden to trade or to receive presents, should be so liberally remunerated, that, in addition to all their other motives to rectitude, they should feel a strong pecuniary interest in the pure and right performance of their duty. I have been told, by persons who have heard Pitt speak on the subject, that it was his most anxious wish to render the emoluments of office in India, and the nature of the duties, and the respect which belonged to the profession, such that men of the highest family, and of the best abilities, might be tempted to embark in the East India Company's service, with as good a prospect of distinction and fortune as in any walk of life, to which their birth, talents, and advantages in other respects, might entitle them to aspire.

It will, indeed, be a sad day for British India, if it shall ever come, when, in the spirit of a narrow and short-sighted economy, its rulers shall risk the deterioration of their service by reducing the legitimate prospects of distinction and fortune which it has hitherto held out. Too much, perhaps, has already been attempted in that way; but it is surely dangerous ground to tread upon; for even Mr. Pitt's measure must have proved inoperative in practice, and the whole of its provisions might have fallen to pieces long ago, had it not been so contrived, that the paramount motives to action in India, and which came eventually to pervade all ranks and classes of the Company's servants, should rest essentially on the same genuine public spirit which has given to old England herself the ascendency elsewhere. Nevertheless, deep-rooted as this noble sentiment may be, and productive though it must ever be found when duly encouraged, it may readily be starved out of the field. No parsimony in the pecuniary rewards given to a man of honour, nor any indignities arising from the denial of his due distinction, can prove strong enough to induce him to *forfeit* the trust he has once undertaken. But if the treatment which a public servant receives in India be essentially unworthy of his character and station in society; or if the rewards of his labours be not commensurate to the sacrifices he makes in consenting to abandon his friends, home, and all the various walks of fame and profit which other lines of life hold out to him, how are his services to be retained? How is it to be expected that he will bring up his children to such a losing or degrading profession? What right have his employers to expect that his place will not be speedily supplied by a lower description of talents and character? Is it, after all, likely, that any purchasable service will ever eventually prove so cheap as that which is first-rate, however great its money price? As all analogy and all experience show that the contrary holds good in every other walk of industry, and that the truest economy in the long run is to engage and to retain the best service at whatever cost, why should this well-established rule prove false in India?

CHAPTER V.

THE FIRST WAR WITH TIPPOO SULTAN.

After the death of Hyder, the war between his son Tippoo and the English proceeded with somewhat less activity than before. But the struggle in the Carnatic between the French and English rather gained in briskness, and with so much advantage on the side of the enemy, that about midsummer of 1783, the most gloomy apprehensions were entertained at Madras. Just at that moment the news of peace in Europe fortunately arrived, and Tippoo, being left to fight it out single-handed, without his allies the French, was brought to sign a treaty, early in 1784, on the condition of a mutual restitution of conquests.

The measures consequent upon the discussions in parliament already alluded to, respecting the administration of India, were now about to be brought into full action ; and it was well for our Eastern rule that this particular period was chosen to infuse new vigour into the system. If Tippoo, when he renewed the war, had found us no better provided than we were when his father attacked us, he could scarcely have failed to make an impression upon the British authority in India, from which it might have been difficult to recover. But upon the passing of Mr. Pitt's bill, and the measures taken in consequence to consolidate our power in the East, we rose like a giant refreshed; and it is scarcely a figure of speech to say, that the arm of the British minister extended to India, and made its strength be felt there, as it was long afterwards with such irresistible force in Europe. The first person to whom the new authority was entrusted was Lord Cornwallis, a nobleman admirably adapted to the situation, as his high birth and talents gave the best possible security for justice being done to the grand experiment then about to be tried, of ruling India, like any other part of the empire, on the strict principles of justice and honour. As he was greatly esteemed in England, all parties appeared satisfied with the appointment. His lordship's rank and character, while they brought him into close and confidential communication with the Crown, placed him as much as possible above the undue influence of the ministry, and also relieved him from any improper dependence upon the Court of Directors. In India, all classes, both of the British and the natives, were prepared to yield cheerful obedience to the new governor-general ; and he availed himself fully of the advantages of his position, not merely by forming political alliances of immense importance, and engaging in successful wars, but by introducing many extremely important improvements into the military and civil establishments of India. For the present I shall touch only upon those great military and political measures adopted by Lord Cornwallis, to curb the ambition, and thus to counteract, if he could not subdue, the hereditary and rancorous hostility of Tippoo Sultan. In this Lord Cornwallis succeeded to a great extent ; but it was left to a still more powerful arm to crush that spirit altogether.

It will afford a tolerably distinct conception of one very interesting branch of Indian politics at that period, to state what precautionary measures Lord Cornwallis thought necessary, before coming to close quarters with such a formidable personage as Tippoo. In military talents, it is true, that chief fell greatly short of his father, but he yielded nothing to him in respect of ferocity and sincere enmity to the British, while his resources continued unimpaired, and in some respects were even greater than they had been under Hyder. The sultan's hostile purposes, indeed, had been so very thinly veiled, that it was impossible for any one not to see that he was collecting together every possible means for our overthrow, and forming alliances in every quarter of India to weaken our means of injuring him whenever it should suit his purpose to break out in open warfare.

Now, although the French, for the present, were quiet, we did not feel quite strong enough to engage with Tippoo single-handed ; while, on the other hand, Lord Cornwallis was unfortunately tied up so strictly by the act of Parliament, that he could not legally take the initiative in the war, however expedient it had become ; but he was compelled to wait, at a monstrous loss of political and military advantage, till it suited his enemy Tippoo to commence hostilities. Neither could the governor-general, in strictness, form treaties, offensive and defensive, with the nations he wished to ally with himself against Tippoo, as such engagements, however desirable, might fairly have been construed into virtual declarations of war. In process of time, however, it became absolutely necessary, in spite of these injudicious refinements of a distant legislation, to make preparations for the hostilities in which Tippoo Sultan's conduct showed evidently that we must soon be engaged, whether we wished it or not.

Without racking our brains and breaking our jaws by repeating a vocabulary of unpronounceable Indian names of places and persons, it may readily be understood by any one who will turn to the map of India, that about the centre of the peninsula of Hindustan, between the seventeenth and nineteenth degrees of north latitude, there lies a large district, called Hyderabad, with the Godavery and Kistna, two celebrated streams, flowing through it to the eastward, and emptying themselves into the bay of Bengal. This immense territory, at the time we are treating of, was governed by a monarch named Nizam Ali, who, some years before, having killed his brother out of the way, then reigned in his stead. This monarch had made sundry favourable treaties with the British, but it now became of greater moment than ever to secure his friendship and active co-operation with us in our inevitable war with Tippoo. In other words, it was essential to make it the Nizam's interest to help us to crush Tippoo by all the means in his power.

The Mahrattas, also, the capital of whose empire, Poonah, will be found in latitude about eighteen and a half degrees north, not far eastward of Bombay, became very important persons in casting the parts for the great military drama soon to be acted on the southern plains of Hindustan. These Mahratta states — who, though some of them have since been annihilated, and others effectually muzzled and chained, were, in those days, little better than mere plundering and lawless freebooters—had united with the Nizam a few years before against Tippoo. But the Sultan had beat them both so soundly that they now respected his power, and neither the Nizam nor the Paishwah, (the head of the Mahrattas,) though hating Tippoo with all their hearts, wished again to engage lightly with him. At all events, the Mahrattas were anxious to avoid a war of aggression, unless they could be certain of the support of the British in the contest, and of a substantial guarantee for security afterwards. Lord Cornwallis, entangled and sorely hampered as he was by the temporising and neutralising clauses of the act of Parliament, and teased by the natural jealousies of these two rival powers of the Mahrattas and the Nizam, had enough on his hands, besides his own preparations for fighting Tippoo. The Nizam saw no objection to the proposed alliance with the British, but he so much distrusted the assurances of his neighbours,

the Mahrattas, that he greatly desired to slip into the treaty some specific clause by which he should be guaranteed against any attack from these incorrigible plunderers, when his own troops were absent in Mysore co-operating with the English in curbing Tippoo's power. It appeared, indeed, from the whole tenor of these curious and characteristic negotiations, that while the Nizam expressed the most unbounded reliance on the slightest promise of Lord Cornwallis, he testified an unceasing suspicion of the most solemn asseverations of his native allies. In the mean time, Lord Cornwallis, from a just apprehension of giving offence to the Mahrattas, and thus losing the advantage of their co-operation in the war against Tippoo, was obliged to avoid committing himself by a treaty, the very terms of which must have implied his distrust of their good faith. He at last succeeded in giving the Nizam confidence by dint of verbal assurances alone, conveyed in conversation by the British resident; and it affords an interesting proof of the estimation in which his Lordship was held, even at the outset of his splendid career, that a suspicious native authority should rest satisfied with his simple unwritten assurance on so momentous an occasion.

The aid of a subsidiary force was at once granted to the Nizam, and Lord Cornwallis held out to him prospects of great and permanent territorial advantages, in the event of their joint efforts bringing Tippoo to his bearings. What was still more important to the Nizam, he was encouraged to look forward, at a less inconvenient opportunity, for complete security, by a formal treaty with the British, against that most serious of all the dangers which threatened his power—the restless and insatiable ambition of his plundering neighbours, the Mahrattas. These pledges of support were in the end all fully redeemed, and our faith with the Nizam substantiated. It must be confessed, however, that after Lord Cornwallis quitted India, the Nizam had more than once but too good reason to apprehend he was to be left in the lurch, and his interests sacrificed to the mischievous neutral policy already alluded to.

It cost Lord Cornwallis a vast deal more trouble to bring the crafty Mahrattas into a hearty co-operation in the grand alliance against Tippoo: for unfortunately there existed no subsidiary treaty with them, as with the Nizam, and his lordship at first wished that they should act by themselves in the war. The Mahrattas, however, were much too adroit for this; and, after some delay, a treaty of offensive and defensive alliance against Tippoo Sultan was concluded between the English governor and the Paishwah, about midsummer 1790. The cunning and able minister who then managed the affairs of the Mahrattas at Poonah, was stimulated not only by a sense of recent injuries sustained by his country from Tippoo, and an apprehension of the future violence of that prince, but by the prospect of wresting from him four provinces won from them by Hyder Ali.

The following extract from a letter from his lordship, written just before the war, gives us an amusing peep into the state of affairs. "My dependence," says he, "upon the support of both the Nizam and the Paishwah upon the present occasion, is grounded solely upon the expectation of their being guided by the common influence of passions, and by the considerations of evident interest which ought to dispose them to seize with eagerness a favourable opportunity to reduce the power of a prince whose ambition knows no bounds, and from whom both of them have suffered."

As the governor-general was prevented by the terms of the act of Parliament from going to war until his enemy actually attacked either him or his allies, or gave indications of such intention so obvious that there could remain no doubt about the matter, he was obliged to wait till Tippoo commenced hostilities. This was not long, however. The Rajah of Travancore, on the Malabar or western coast, and a tributary of ours, had purchased a couple of forts from the Dutch, which Tippoo declared were his, and vowed to have back again. The Rajah said he should keep them, and having between him and Tippoo a pretty strong line of military forts, resolved to defend his property. As these Travancore lines make a great figure in Indian history, it may be interesting to mention that they consisted of a ditch sixteen feet broad and twenty deep, crowned by a strong bamboo hedge and a slight parapet, backed also by a rampart, and flanked by numerous bastions. They commenced at the sea, and extended inland to the eastward for about thirty miles, to the Elephant Mountains, a part of the great chain of Ghauts which fringe the western side of India.

The British, as by treaty bound having stepped in to mediate, instructions were given to the Madras government by the governor-general in council, to investigate the claims of the contending parties, and if necessary, to enforce their award, whatever that might be. The Madras government, however, appear to have trifled with these directions, and strangely enough to have leaned quite on Tippoo's side. At all events, they certainly failed to prepare the army, as they were instructed, in order to take active measures to support their eventual decision. For this dilatoriness they incurred the unqualified displeasure of the supreme government. The case, indeed, was certainly one of considerable difficulty; but as it was by this time notorious that Tippoo, in the true taste of his dynasty, sought always rather to cut than to untie such Gordian knots in politics, the local government, which trusted to his forbearance, well deserved the censure passed upon their inactivity. The sultan himself very soon justified the governor-general's precautions, by drawing the sword, and attacking the lines of Travancore. Being driven back, however, in the first instance, he disavowed his own outrage on our tributary, the Rajah, by describing the inroad as an unauthorised act of his troops. This aggressive act on our ally, however, furnished all the excuse required, and from that instant the most vigorous and active measures were taken to prosecute the war. Tippoo feeling himself rather in a scrape, evidently wished to defer actual hostilities as long as he possibly could; but, unfortunately for him, it proved beyond the reach of his nature to resist the temptation of pouncing a second time on the lines of Travancore when he saw a fair opening, and on this occasion he succeeded in capturing them. Still, in spite of this second aggression, Tippoo

professed the most friendly disposition to the British, lamented these mutual misunderstandings, and offered to send a person of dignity to the general commanding the Madras army "to remove," as he expressed it in his despatch, "the dust by which the upright mind of the general had been obscured." There could hardly be much dust in the eyes of the man who wrote the following answer :—

"I have received your letter," says General Meadows, "and I understand its contents. You are a great prince: and, but for your cruelty to your prisoners, an enlightened one. The English, equally incapable of offering an insult as of submitting to one, have always looked upon war as declared from the moment you attacked their ally the king of Travancore. God does not always give battle to the strong, nor the race to the swift, but, generally, success to those whose cause is just. Upon that we depend."

A few days subsequent to this pithy little despatch (about the middle of June 1790), General Meadows, marching from the plain of Trichinopoly entered the territories of the sultan, and commenced the war with vigour. In the first instance Tippoo gained some successes, which encouraged him to act on the offensive; and he actually entered the Carnatic, like his father, though with inferior means of mischief. The governor-general himself, Lord Cornwallis, who arrived about this time at Madras, took the command of the army, and made some most important changes. One of these was the assumption of the sovereignty of the Carnatic from the native ruler called the nabob; a measure which, in its consequences, led to endless discussions. I have no intention of touching upon these technical matters, or of describing the events of the war, which Lord Cornwallis conducted with admirable skill, during the whole of 1791 and a part of 1792. At length the Royal Tiger was driven to his den, and Seringapatam being invested in February 1792, the assault was only stayed at the last moment by the submission of Tippoo, whose political annihilation was thus deferred during eight years longer of tyranny to his own people, and bitter hostility to the English.

The preliminary treaty which Tippoo was now forced to agree to, required him to cede one half of his territories to the British and their allies; and to pay three crores and thirty lacs of rupees, or considerably upwards of three millions sterling, as a compensation for the expenses of the war. Two of his eldest sons were also given up as hostages for the due fulfilment of this treaty. Every one, I suppose, has read the description, or seen the picture, representing the singular scene which took place on the delivery of these hostages. "These children," said the Vakeel, "were this morning the sons of the Sultan, my master; they must now look to you, my lord, as their father!" Lord Cornwallis, with much good-nature, gave each of the boys a gold watch; and next day the princes presented his lordship with a Persian cimeter, upon which occasion old Tippoo fired off a royal salute from the fort indicative of his satisfaction at the reception of his sons.

It may not be uninteresting, because highly characteristic of all parties, to mention that these pacific arrangements were very nearly broken up, and the campaign reopened with increased rancour, by a circumstance which probably touched the heart of Tippoo a vast deal more than the captivity of his progeny, by threatening to deprive him of what he considered his just revenge, on the thoughts of which he had been brooding during the whole war. It seems that the Rajah of Coorg,—whose territory lay on the west, and adjacent to Mysore, between Tippoo's country and the Malabar coast,—had taken an active share in the war against him—partly from hereditary hatred, partly from a very natural wish to crush so troublesome a neighbour. Tippoo on the other hand, who had never dreamed that the territory of his rebellious tributary, the Rajah of Coorg, would be in the portion of country to be ceded by the treaty, became excessively enraged when the intention of Lord Cornwallis was first stated. He at once broke off the negotiations, and, although a million sterling of the fine, and his two sons, the hostages, had already reached the English camp, he seriously meditated a renewal of hostilities. Lord Cornwallis calmly stuck to his original point; and we may easily conceive the terror in which the poor Rajah of Coorg must have been kept while these high contracting parties were debating whether or not he should be sacrificed. In the end, Lord Cornwallis succeeded in making out his point; and Tippoo, though still furiously indignant, was obliged to resign all claims whatever upon the country in dispute. This result not only demonstrated the military superiority of the British, but increased the respect of all their allies, and served to establish the impression which so much pains had been taken to fix on the minds of the native authorities, especially those of the Nizam and the Mahrattas, that the grounds on which the war had been originally undertaken were not only those of justice and necessity, but of strict good faith to all those native powers who assisted us.

Much astonishment has been expressed that Lord Cornwallis, when he had the power, did not utterly destroy Tippoo. Some persons have alleged, in explanation, that if the whole territory had been taken possession of and distributed amongst the allies, the two native states in the confederacy, the Mahrattas and the Nizam, would have been rendered too powerful for our policy to control. But this seems an unfounded notion. The finances of the British government were still in a very low state, and the outcry in England against war in India was echoed to the governor-general's ears by every packet, and in every conceivable shape of remonstrance. To the other motives tempting him to conclude so advantageous a peace, may be added, the undisguised jealousy, and almost hostility, of his two unwieldy native allies—one timorous, distrustful, and very slow to move,—the other treacherous in principle, and only co-operating with the English against Tippoo out of pure revenge. An approaching war between England and France may also have quickened his lordship's movements. Whatever were the real reasons, peace was made; half of the sultan's kingdom was surrendered and divided, the money paid, and the troops marched back again to their several homes. Thus ended the first campaign of the British against Tippoo Sultan.

I must now very reluctantly pass over unnoticed the arrangements made by Lord Cornwallis with Scindia, the powerful native authority already

alluded to, who had forcibly established himself in the northern parts of Hindustan, and obtained possession of the emperor of Delhi. But I must not omit to mention in passing, that long afterwards (in 1803) it cost the Duke of Wellington, then Major-general Wellesley, only one brief, but very hard-fought and glorious campaign, to break the neck of the powerful confederacy formed by Scindia and another Mahratta chief of the name of Holkar. These princes, allied with many other minor plunderers, saw with infinite jealousy the gradual establishment of order, security, and efficient national defence in those regions over which they used formerly to sweep almost unresisted, with their clouds of fierce marauders. I must likewise hurry over the very important changes brought about in the relations between the Company and the nabob of the Carnatic, and pass altogether those entered into with the vizier of Oude. In order fully to understand these complicated branches of Indian history, a great deal more ground must be gone over than mere European inquirers possess patience for; while every Indian reader already knows more of the details than any general outline or sketch, however careful, could furnish.

The extraordinary success which marked Lord Cornwallis's administration is, no doubt, to be traced very much to the concentration of the resources of India, brought about by the recent amendment in the constitution of the Company by Pitt's bill, and the acts subsequently passed, explanatory of its intention. The entire possession by the governor-general of the civil and military functions, not only of the Bengal government, but of the other presidencies, enabled him to assume an active control and direction at any given point of India, at the very moment required, with the undivided momentum of the whole British resources. In such hands this force proved irresistible; and the favourable impression originally made on the minds, not only of the English, but of the natives of India, by the rank and character of Lord Cornwallis, was amply confirmed by their observation of his skill in wielding these new and extended powers. Far and near, the successes of the governor-general had added strength and reputation to the government of the English. But while the admiration of the natives was extorted by these events, their fears also were roused, and no moderation on the part of Lord Cornwallis could remove their alarms for the future. In England, strange to say, another impression appears to have been left on the minds of the Court of Directors and the king's ministry by the same course of events; for it was now fondly believed by many honest folks at home, that the affairs of the Company in the East had been placed by the exertions of Lord Cornwallis, on the true footing of security and strength which had been so long desired; and that, in future, nothing was requisite but mild, moderate, and conciliatory counsels, to secure the lasting tranquillity and prosperity of the British possessions.

Lord Cornwallis left India in August 1793 and was succeeded in the supreme government by Sir John Shore, who became afterwards Lord Teignmouth. During the five years of peace which followed, before Lord Wellesley assumed the management of affairs in India, what has been termed "the neutral system of policy" was adopted, in strict conformity with the literal sense of the legislative act already so frequently alluded to. A clause in that instrument declares, "that as the pursuit of schemes of conquest is repugnant to the wish, to the honour, and the policy of the British nation, it is not lawful for the governor-general in council, without the express authority of the Court of Directors, or of the secret committee, either to declare or commence hostilities, or to enter into any treaty for making war against any of the native princes or states in India, or to make any treaty, guaranteeing the dominions of such princes or states, except when hostilities have commenced, or preparations are actually made for the attack of the British nation in India, or of some of the states and princes whose dominions it shall be engaged by subsisting treaties to defend."

This act, which is still in force, was intended to set limits to ambition, and to check schemes of conquest, as all extensions of our territory were indiscriminately called in those days. But it surely could never have been the intention of the supreme legislature to deprive the local governments of India of the power of adopting preventive measures against political dangers which they had good reason to believe were in progress, or to prescribe, as it were, a positive indifference to the concerns of its neighbours. Could it possibly be meant to deprive the British government in India of the legitimate exercise of that moral influence and military power which its past wisdom, courage, or wealth, had gained for it? Are not the political influence and direct military power of the Company, in point of fact, the principal, and indeed the most legitimate, means of maintaining peace and tranquillity, not only in their own states, but in those of their neighbours?

The governor-general, however, who succeeded Lord Cornwallis, appears to have thought otherwise; and in the sincere and conscientious desire of governing India according to the literal meaning of the statute, and the expressed wishes of the authorities at home, he devoted himself entirely to the neutral line of policy. "The result of this experiment," says Sir John Malcolm, "offers an important lesson to those who are entrusted with the administration of British India. It was proved from the events of this administration, (that of Sir John Shore, afterwards Lord Teignmouth), that no ground of political advantage could be abandoned without being instantly occupied by an enemy; and that to resign influence was not merely to resign power, but to allow that power to pass into hands hostile to the British government. The consequence of political inaction was equally obvious; for this inactive system of policy, so far from attaining its object—which was to preserve affairs upon the footing it found them—had only the effect of keeping the British government stationary, while all around it advanced; and of exposing it to those dangers which resulted from the revolutions of its neighbours, while it was even denied the power of adapting its policy to the change of circumstances. A period of six years' peace, so far from having added to the strength or improved the security of the British dominions in India, had placed them in a situation of comparative danger. Though our strength was not lessened, the power and resources of the other

states of India had increased. The confidence and attachment of our allies were much shaken, if not destroyed; and the presumption and hostile disposition of the principal native powers of India too clearly showed that it was to a principle of weakness or of selfish policy, and not of moderation, that they ascribed the course which had been pursued by the British government."—*Malcolm's Polit. Hist. of India*, p. 225.

The allusion in the above extract to the diminished confidence of our allies refers chiefly to the effect produced on the mind of the Nizam by our permitting the Mahrattas to attack him, when he, the Nizam, felt himself entitled in reason and in equity, if not by actual treaty, to our aid against his treacherous neighbours. Though there existed no official writings on the point, the Nizam could not forget the authorised assurances of the British resident. Lord Cornwallis, at the time he was courting the alliance of the Nizam against Tippoo, said, most truly and forcibly, that we owed our power in India to that reputation which led the most perfidious nations to rely with confidence upon the verbal assurances of our representatives. "There can be no doubt," eloquently adds Sir John Malcolm, "that our Eastern empire is held solely by opinion; or, in other words, by that respect and awe with which the comparative superiority of our knowledge, justice and system of rule, have inspired the inhabitants of our own territories, and that confidence in our truth, reliance on our good faith, and dread of our arms, which are impressed on every nation of India."

It is very material towards the formation of a right judgment on Indian affairs, to bear in mind one class of circumstances, which, though sufficiently striking when fairly stated, are by no means obvious till dispassionately considered. A belief has become very general, that the East India Company have a direct interest and a constant wish to extend their dominions. Appearances too often, it must be allowed, have gone far to justify such a charge; but I am convinced that a very moderate degree of inquiry into the real merits of any one, or all of the cases embraced by these suspicions—in recent times at all events—will not only prove the absolute necessity of those extensions of frontier, but show that they have been most reluctantly made.

People forget, or perhaps have never been led to consider, that when circumstances lead the government of British India into such wars as those which, in our own defence, we waged with Tippoo, and afterwards with the Mahrattas, or more lately with the Nepaulese or the Burmese—that is, with any of the native princes, who would have deprived us of our paramount authority had we not subdued them—we, by conquering them, only change the character of our political relations with those particular states, but we also necessarily change our relations with those territories lying beyond them, which thus for the first time become our next-door neighbours.

Let it be considered, that if we conquer a country so completely as to assume the entire government of it, we must do one of two things;—we must either, in the character of masters of the new country, adopt as parts of our own policy, all those engagements by which the former possessors of the conquered territory were bound to their neighbours; or we must form fresh arrangements with those neighbouring states, between which and ourselves the new territory was formerly interposed. We cannot by possibility lie on our oars, and say we will neither meddle with the old engagements, nor make fresh ones. Our new neighbours will never submit to this; and in most cases it does so happen that some stipulation on this very head forms a part of the terms under the sanction of which we enter as occupants of the new country. "Every new alliance that we contract," says Mr. Henry Russell, in his recent evidence before the House of Commons, "brings us into territorial or political contact with other states, which, in their turn, submit to the same system and fall under the same consequences." These inevitable arrangements, unfortunately, increase in number, extent, and complexity, as our frontier extends; and a moment's reflection will show, that it is hardly possible, almost in any case, to foresee what may be the solemn engagements with which any given conquest will entangle us; consequently we cannot possibly predict what future wars we may be led into. "To conquer peace" is a very pretty figure of speech; but it is perhaps the most difficult of all battles to win, and more difficult, I suspect, in India than in any other country. No person therefore, acquainted with the real state of the fact, will suppose it probable, I might say possible, that any Eastern statesman of experience or good sense can desire to extend the territories of the Company with any view to the ordinary purposes of ambition—the love of power, the extension of patronage, or even the increase of revenue.

The following vivid but rather startling picture of the manner in which our empire has gone on increasing, is drawn by a well-qualified judge of such matters, Mr. R. Jenkins, who was political resident at Nagpore for twenty years.

"The rise and progress of our power in India," says Mr. Jenkins, in his evidence before the House of Commons on the 27th of March, 1832, "have been rapid and marvellous. Unlike other empires, ours has been in a great degree forced upon us, built up at almost every step against our own deliberate resolution to avoid it; in the face, I may say, of every opposition which could be given to it by the legislature, his majesty's government, and by the Court of Directors, acting upon correspondent dispositions in our governments abroad. Each successive governor-general in the last half-century, sent from this country, with minds fresh and untouched by local prejudices—including Lord Cornwallis during his first administration, who went to India under the act containing the well-known denunciation against conquest and extension of dominion, (see preceding page,) Lord Wellesley, Lord Minto, Lord Hastings, (the last two strongly impressed against the existing foreign policy in India,) and Lord Amherst—have seen reason to enter into wars and negotiations, defensive in their objects, but generally terminating in that very extension of territory and dominion which was dreaded."

The difficulty and anxiety of governing our Eastern empire, as it gradually swells under the inevitable force of circumstances, eternally moving forwards, far outweigh the pleasures even of kingly command. The additional income arising from

newly-acquired provinces seldom or never balances the increased expenditure; and the extension of patronage, at all times doubtful in extent, too often proves a thriftless and thankless source of enjoyment. To maintain the tranquillity of India by encouraging mutual cordiality amongst the native powers, instead of fomenting their jealousies, and to preserve what we possess essentially with a view to the prosperity of the inhabitants, and to the general credit and happiness of our Indian empire, is now, and I fully believe has long been, the prime object of anxiety with all our Indian authorities both at home and abroad.

Lord Wellesley's recorded opinions upon some of these points are well worthy of attention. In replying to an address from the inhabitants of Calcutta, at the close of the great Mahratta war of 1803, his lordship says, "My solicitude has been directed to the important purpose of effecting a general pacification of India on principles of reciprocal justice and moderation. The power, reputation, and dignity of the British empire in India will derive additional security and lustre from the establishment of peace and good order among the native states. In the decline of intrinsic strength, inferior states may perhaps have gained a temporary safety by fomenting the discord of contiguous powers. In any extremity, such a policy is unwarrantable and disgraceful, nor can permanent repose be secured upon such precarious foundations in the actual condition of this empire. I am happy to declare, that the concord of the established native states, the independence of their separate authorities, the internal peace of their respective dominions, and the tranquillity of their respective subjects, will tend to confirm and to fortify the power and resources of the British government, and must constitute the most desirable objects of the British policy in India."

More or less, these generous and truly statesman-like sentiments are certainly participated by the whole body of the East India Company's servants. They all know right well—some by experience, some by the instruction and example of others, and some by the mere force of those right principles which always beget the habit of thinking and feeling correctly, that their best chance for fame or fortune, public renown or private peace of mind, consists exclusively in cherishing honourable motives to action as the rule of their lives. To suppose that such men can ever wish to extend the British empire in the East, from the sheer love of conquest or any other selfish motive, or that they are regulated in their measures by "low ambition and the pride of kings," is to suppose a perversion of intellect totally irreconcilable, upon any known doctrines of policy, with the astonishing moral influence which has followed their steps.

CHAPTER VI.

ADMINSTRATION OF INDIA BY THE MARQUIS OF WELLESLEY—DOWNFALL OF TIPPOO.

By far the most interesting period of East Indian history, commences with the arrival of Marquis Wellesley (then Lord Mornington), as governor-general, in the spring of 1798. The state of affairs in India at that moment was such, that none but a mind of the highest order, and supported by resources moral and physical almost unlimited, could have seen through the formidable difficulties of that period, or hoped to overcome them. Lord Wellesley was possessed of peculiar advantages, which gave double confidence and vigour to the application of his talents and experience to the duties of a practical statesman. He had long enjoyed the benefit of the private friendship of Mr. Pitt, then prime minister of England, and thus possessed an intimate knowledge of all the different branches of the general government of the empire, of which India, since the bill of 1784, had so happily formed an integral portion under one and the same head. His lordship was therefore not only acquainted with the bearing of each part of the grand scheme of British government upon every other, but from knowing that he possessed the confidence of the ministry at home, he could calculate upon the most ample support in all measures which had a business-like tendency to maintain those ultimate relations between the general administration of the empire, and those of India in particular.

Lord Wellesley appears to have been duly conscious of his own superior powers, and to have been resolute in carrying his measures through every obstacle when once he felt their propriety. But all parts of his proceedings, in correspondence, in conversation, in the most energetic action, and in the coolest deliberation afterwards, seem to show an unusual desire to reach the exact truth, and to avoid every kind of subterfuge or disguise. I have often been told by persons on the spot, who had much intercourse with him, that no one could be more minute in his preliminary inquiries than Lord Wellesley, or more patient in the investigation of any question. But when he had once gained all the requisite information, he became inflexibly resolute in his purposes, and, with astonishing sagacity, saw his way far ahead of almost every person about him, even of those who had most local experience.

For one qualification of a great commanding officer his lordship was particularly distinguished. Where he placed his confidence, he gave it without limitation; indeed no man—even Wellington, his thrice renowned brother—understood better the true science of delegation. He appears invariably to have taken great pains to let his wishes be fully understood by the persons he employed, and having then furnished them with ample means, he started them off to execute the required service in their own way. Those whom he employed always felt certain of his hearty support, and sure, not only of his just meed of applause, but confident that everything would be made the most of rather to their advantage than his own. Lord Wellesley seldom appears to have taken into consideration the probable effect which his measures might have on himself personally. Indeed, so pure and lofty a public spirit seems to have guided all his measures, that he delighted in throwing off credit from himself upon those who had participated in the task. The consequence of this system was, that every public servant in India worked under him, not only with all the energy which belongs to independence, but with the additional stimulus of his generous companionship and assistance. As there existed no jealousy, and no suspicious cramping of

authority, there followed no reproaches even when failures occurred. So that all parties pulled together in a manner to which I know of no parallel, except in the fleets under Nelson, where, from the adoption of similar principles, every man, as England expected, really did his duty. The prodigious spring and elasticity which those animating principles, guided by such a hand, and backed by such immense resources, gave to the whole Indian system, was soon felt from one end of our huge territory to the other; and as the services to be executed were frequently of the utmost importance and variety, so, as if by magic, the penetrating genius of the new governor-general always discovered and drew to light an adequate number of agents to perform his will. It may be truly said, that such was his sagacity and his means of gaining a knowledge of character, that he very rarely made even slight mistakes in determining these selections; and, in consequence, almost every enterprise, whether of a military or of a civil nature, which he set on foot, succeeded in a way which astonished not merely the natives, but the most long-sighted and experienced of the English themselves. I have even been told of men who, under the fervent stimulus of Lord Wellesley's encouragement and support, have been heard to wonder again and again at their own success; and though, at first, they trembled at the extent of their sudden authority, and staggered under the weight of responsibilities quite new to them, they came at length to discover that the governor-general had appreciated their capacity better than they had done themselves.

I need scarcely say, that when the fate and fortunes of mighty empires, and the happiness or misery of countless myriads of our subjects in the East were at stake, a governor of Lord Wellesley's stamp was obliged often to ride over the precise letter of his instructions, and occasionally to appoint men to high stations out of the jog-trot order of seniority. But of all these irregular nominations, I do not remember to have heard of one which in the end did not fully bear out the wisdom of the choice. At the time, and on the spot, it was naturally to be expected that some dissatisfaction might be felt by those whose rank and length of service gave them, to a certain extent, a prior claim. But even these persons very soon recognised the justice, or rather the public fitness of the preference. After the capture of Seringapatam, for example, it became of the utmost consequence who should be nominated governor of that fortress, as the same officer, for obvious reasons, was to be placed at the head of the commission appointed to conduct the ultimate arrangement of the conquest. Many persons conceived it to be a perilous experiment, and even a piece of gross favouritism, in the governor-general, to name a near relation of his own to execute these important trusts. But when we know that the Duke of Wellington, then merely Lieutenant-Colonel Wellesley, was the man selected, how different is the sentiment! Are we not irresistibly carried back to those momentous times, and forced to respect the prophetic sagacity and decision of character which had power not only to anticipate the judgment of the world at large, but firmness enough to act upon that anticipation, in defiance of all etiquettes and vulgar surmises?

At the period of Lord Wellesley's arrival in India (1798), Tippoo Sultan, the most formidable of our foes in that quarter of the world, had regained much of his strength; and as he never ceased to feel the bitter smart arising from his defeat by Lord Cornwallis, he kept a constant look-out for opportunities of revenging himself. The aspect of political affairs, however, had materially changed during the interval which had elapsed since his father Hyder overran the Carnatic in 1780, and so nearly extinguished the British authority in that quarter. But, unfortunately for poor Tippoo, he either did not perceive, or did not make a proper allowance for those circumstances which had occurred during the preceding twelve or fifteen years to alter his position relatively to that of the English; nor perhaps was it possible for him to have done so. His own kingdom of Mysore, in the course of six years' peace (which was then considered a long period of repose for any Indian state), had greatly increased in wealth, population, and military resources; while, owing to political mismanagement, the adjacent territory of the Carnatic indirectly under our authority had rapidly deteriorated. Now, the sultan could not be made to understand, that although one part of our government might work ill, the other parts might be working well; and thus he was blindly led by his wishes greatly to underrate our power. Instead of forming a cordial alliance with us, which he might readily have done, he showed no disposition to treat the English as friends a moment longer than delay appeared propitious to his fixed purpose of revenge. In this vindictive temper he laboured incessantly, and with considerable success, to strengthen his connections with our enemies the French, by extending the authority of that nation in India.

Tippoo knew not, and his friends the French would not be so impolitic as to tell him—even if they were fully aware of the fact themselves, which is doubtful—that the native powers of India had no longer to contend with a mere company of merchants, possessed of scanty resources, and not only distrusted by the mass of their countrymen at home, but unsupported by the ministers of the crown. He and his allies had yet to learn, to their bitter cost, that British India had been lately formed into a part of the British empire, and that, while its direct executive administration was still vested in the East India Company, a superintending control had been given to the king's ministers; and, consequently, that all the resources of the nation at large could at any moment be combined with those of the Company to give effect to their joint purpose. The unfortunate Tippoo, indeed, may well be excused for missing this point, when so many, even amongst the best-informed persons in England, were slow to perceive the enormous advantage of the changes introduced by Pitt, and even predicted from thence the ruin of the country his measures were intended to benefit.

When half of Tippoo's territory was taken from him by Lord Cornwallis in 1792, and divided between the Mahrattas, the Nizam, and ourselves, offensive and defensive treaties were formed by us with these two states, by which it was understood—especially by the weaker power, the Nizam—that any one party was to be protected against

the other. Such was assuredly Lord Cornwallis's intention; but this—unhappily, as many people think—was not the view taken by his successor in the government, who, acting under a conscientious sense of duty, adhered rigidly to the letter of the restrictive act of parliament so often alluded to. The object of this act was to establish a neutral system of policy, in order, as it was vainly imagined, to check the progress of territorial conquest which was supposed to actuate our Indian rulers, by forbidding their entering into hostilities with the natives before an actual aggression had been made upon us. In 1795, however, the cunning Mahrattas, having discovered the policy of the reigning powers, were tempted by the belief that we should not lend our assistance to our old ally, actually entered the Nizam's country, and stripped him of a considerable portion of his dominions. The Nizam, feeling highly irritated at our not standing by him, dismissed the English subsidiary force from his capital, Hyderabad, and shortly afterwards admitted another large body of troops, which was entirely commanded by Frenchmen, amounting at one time to twenty-three battalions, with a formidable train of ordnance.

Tippoo, who of course was enchanted with all this squabbling between us and our allies, spared no pains to foment the quarrel; and so successful were his intrigues, added to those of the French commander, M. Raymond, that at the time of Lord Wellesley's arrival in India, all good-will towards us had apparently vanished from the Nizam's court.

Nor did his lordship find things in a better condition on the western side of India; for whatever disposition to enter into our views might secretly be entertained by the Paishwa, or chief of the Poonah Mahrattas, he was in no condition to exert himself in alliance with us, either against Tippoo, or for any other purpose. A powerful northern chief, also a Mahratta—well known, I am sure, even to European ears—Doulut Row Scindia, by no means well disposed to us, had left his own territories and come down to Poonah to control the submissive Paishwa. He there effectually succeeded in counteracting all our endeavours to bring the Poonah Mahrattas into cordial alliance with us. Scindia's importance in the scale was greatly augmented by his possessing, as part of his army, a large body of native troops, disciplined after the European method, and all officered by Frenchmen. With this compact corps of infantry, surrounded by clouds of Mahratta horse, Scindia held himself ready at any moment to dash in upon such of the British settlements in the north of India as might be left undefended, in consequence of the troops having been withdrawn for the war which the conduct of Tippoo rendered every day more and more inevitable.

Lord Wellesley, from the very first, and in the spirit of a manly policy, thought it right to give Tippoo every fair chance of accommodating matters, and coming to a just perception of his own station in India. His lordship appears at one time to have had hopes that Tippoo might at last see the inutility of his attempts to dislodge the English, and consequently the advantage of abandoning his French allies, and attaching himself cordially to the power then so manifestly in the ascendant. It has, I know, been alleged that Lord Wellesley never seriously contemplated this turn of affairs; and nothing would, perhaps, have disappointed him more than Tippoo's submission. But the governor-general could not possibly have avoided following up his own definite proposals, and therefore it was clearly Tippoo's fault, and his alone, that he sacrificed sound policy to feelings of personal animosity.

Meanwhile, as every hour brought fresh proofs of Tippoo's hostile intentions, and almost open enmity, it became absolutely indispensable to our safety as a state to take vigorous measures for strengthening our hands by the alliance of the adjacent native powers, before commencing active warlike operations. Upon the Mahrattas, chiefly, in consequence of Scindia's interference at Poonah, Lord Wellesley failed to make any impression; but with the Nizam he succeeded so completely as not only to re-establish the British influence in that quarter, but to demolish entirely the French authority. It happened that the prime minister at the Nizam's court saw further than his master; and it is more than probable he had already discovered the important change which had taken place at the British head-quarters. At all events, the overtures which Lord Wellesley made were well received; and as old Azeem ul Omrah, the minister, brought these proposals under the Nizam's eye, he failed not to point out the dangers by which the kingdom of his highness was surrounded. His avowed enemies, the Mahrattas, openly threatened him; while Tippoo, though just now very civil and coaxing, was not more to be trusted. His principal reliance was therefore upon the French force in his capital. In this dilemma the distracted Nizam said to Omrah, his minister, "If we break with M. Raymond, the Frenchman, we shall straightway be obliged, in self-defence, to admit a still larger subsidiary force of English, and thus we shall become more dependent upon foreigners than ever." "That is very true," said the sagacious minister; "but it is surely wiser to be dependent upon a state whose good faith is acknowledged, and whose power is well consolidated, than upon one whose very existence in India hangs by a thread. If we lose the protection of the French without securing the co-operation of the British, what is to keep out these accursed Mahrattas—or how are we to repel the still more mischievous incursions of Tippoo, supposing him to maintain his ground?"

The Nizam's fears and doubts being at length overcome, he gave his assent to a negotiation with the British resident for the dismissal of the French corps, and for the increase of the English subsidiary force, provided these objects could be connected with a pledge on the part of the British government, that his dominions should be protected from any future unjust demands on the part of the Mahrattas—this being the string on which the Nizam, taught by bitter experience, always harped. A treaty was accordingly soon prepared, by which the English agreed to augment the former subsidiary force at Hyderabad by four battalions, and pledged themselves to arbitrate on principles of impartiality and justice all points in dispute between the Nizam and the Mahratta government at Poonah. The Nizam, on his part, agreed to disband the French corps in his service, and to deliver up its officers to the British authorities.

This last part of the treaty, however, was much

easier written on parchment than enforced in the field. A corps of fourteen thousand armed and well-disciplined men, of whom eleven thousand were on the spot, with a well-appointed park of artillery, and officered by brave and experienced Europeans, were not likely, it was thought, to submit to the paper bullets of a native prince. The admirable management of the British resident, however, Major Kirkpatrick, and the gallantry and skill of his able assistant on this occasion, Captain (afterwards Sir John) Malcolm, enabled them to accomplish this important service. As soon as the promised subsidiary force of the British approached near enough, the full execution of the treaty, as far as related to the dismissal of the French corps, was demanded by the resident. The Nizam now took fright—not unnaturally; and even the intrepid minister, Azeem ul Omrah, felt alarmed at the idea of coolly telling eleven thousand men to lay down their arms! "Gentlemen," said the British resident, to the Nizam and his minister, "all this humming and hawing and apprehension is too late. The orders of the governor-general are peremptory; in his name, and at your peril, I demand the instant and complete execution of the engagements entered into. If, therefore, you persist in this wavering conduct, I shall at once authorise an attack upon the French camp, and the Hyderabad court must be answerable for all the consequences of its weakness and want of good faith."

Another British corps of four battalions, with their guns, which had likewise been assembled on the Nizam's frontier, pending these negotiations, were immediately marched to Hyderabad, where they joined the two battalions formerly stationed there. As soon as all was ready, a movement was made towards the ground commanding the French lines, indicating a resolution to attack them in the event of further delay. These vigorous proceedings having effectually removed the indecision of the Nizam and his minister, a proclamation was issued and sent to the French camp, by which the troops were informed that the Nizam had dismissed all the European officers from his service, and that those who supported the Frenchmen should be punished as traitors! This modest proclamation, aided by the menacing position of the British troops, and by the internal divisions in the French camp, produced a violent mutiny in the enemy's lines, of which immediate advantage was taken. A strong body of the Nizam's horse, and the whole of the British force, closed up and surrounded the French cantonment at daylight. The soldiers, after some discussion, and on receiving a promise that all their arrears of pay should be liquidated, consented to lay down their arms.

Thus, in a few hours, a corps which, including detachments, consisted of fourteen thousand native troops, fully disciplined, and officered by Frenchmen, together with all their artillery, and a well-filled arsenal, containing every description of military stores, was completely disarmed, without a single life having been lost.

It is easy enough in this, as in many other cases of important services, to exclaim after the event, "How easy!"—But those who are best acquainted with the difficulties of command, will know how to appreciate the business-like foresight and the manly confidence which could venture to anticipate such an extraordinary result with means apparently so inadequate. The impression caused all over India by this bold and successful stroke of policy was very great. It may be considered, however, only the first step in a series of political measures, all tending to one important national end—the utter extinction of the French influence in India, and the consequent destruction of all those plans formed by the native powers against us, which rested upon the hope of foreign assistance. Even the demolition of such an inveterate enemy as Tippoo, though of vast consequence, was a desideratum subordinate to the expulsion of the French. For Tippoo, who thought himself their master, was merely their tool, and in disarming our great European enemy of this powerful weapon, Lord Wellesley paralysed their exertions, and almost entirely broke down their hopes in the south of India, though in the north they were still extremely formidable.

The French, as I have already stated, had formed another force under Scindia. An able and most extraordinary person of the name of De Boigne, originally in the service of the English East India Company, had enlisted with Scindia many years before, and succeeded in organising for that chief a regular establishment of infantry and artillery, such as had never before been seen in the service of any native prince of Hindustan. The Mahratta leader, by a liberal but hazardous policy, had assigned to De Boigne a large district of his country, close to the English frontier, and yielding a revenue adequate to the maintenance of a regular force. This, under M. Perron, another Frenchman, his successor, amounted to between forty and fifty thousand well-disciplined troops, and upwards of four hundred guns. As long as this army—for it really was such—remained under the immediate command of De Boigne, the most effective encouragement was given to European officers of all nations to enter his service, and every man was not only allowed to retire from it when he pleased, but to carry with him any property he might have accumulated. When, however, M. Perron succeeded to the command, in 1794, he pursued a different course. De Boigne had always received English and French officers indiscriminately, but Perron accepted French candidates alone. He even discouraged the English so systematically, that at the time of Lord Wellesley's arrival in India, this formidable body of men, acting in close alliance with the impracticable Scindia, was officered so exclusively by French, that it might almost be considered as a force of that hostile nation hanging permanently on the English frontier. They were ready at a moment's warning, at the suggestion of Scindia, or at the invitation of Tippoo, to enter our territory whenever the mass of our troops might be called away for distant service. It is more than probable, that the power of wielding such a force induced Scindia to resist all Lord Wellesley's endeavours to engage him in the alliance against Tippoo; and his lordship's address in neutralising a power of whose assistance he could not avail himself, was very great. This was all that could be accomplished at the period in question, for the time had not yet come when the French influence under Scindia could, with safety, be attacked directly. A few years afterwards, it cost the mighty genius of

Wellington but one short and brilliant campaign —beginning with the famous battle of Assaye—to demolish the French force entirely, and to bring both Scindia and his ally, Holkar—another plundering Mahratta chief—completely and permanently under our soverign authority.

Before such an enterprise could be thought of, it had become absolutely necessary to take effective measures for reducing Tippoo Sultan to terms. While effecting this purpose, however, Lord Wellesley has been charged by some people, very inconsiderately, I conceive, with a wish to pick a quarrel with that monarch, in order that he might pull him from the throne. I dare say he was by no means sorry to find an occasion to go to war, though Tippoo, on his side, was at least as ready to fight. Lord Wellesley, with much prudence, took every care to afford Tippoo an opportunity of stopping in time, and even went further in these conciliatory endeavours than most persons who read the details will be inclined to think right. The whole tenor of Tippoo's conduct, indeed, subsequent to the peace concluded by Lord Cornwallis, in 1792, had shown an implacable hatred to the British government, and a restless impatience to be freed from the presence of the English. He accordingly intrigued with the Nizam at Hyderabad, with the Paishwa at Poonah, and with Scindia in the north. He despatched an embassy to Kaubul, which lies between Persia and India. To Persia, also, he sent a mission, and another even as far as Turkey. His grand hope, however, rested on French co-operation, and in this he was wise, for they were by far the steadiest foes to us.

In the middle of 1798, accounts were received in India that ambassadors from Tippoo had arrived at the Isle of France; and various other evidence showed his great anxiety for immediate reinforcements, preparatory to a grand attack on the British. It has been asserted that Lord Wellesley made more out of these proofs of Tippoo's intrigues with the French than the circumstances fairly warrant; and that too much importance was attached to the danger likely to arise from the Sultan's alliance with our enemies. There would, no doubt, be considerable force in this criticism upon his lordship's reasoning on the occasion, had the case of French influence with Tippoo been the only one consideration. But what was the fact? We have seen that a body of fourteen thousand troops, officered by Europeans hostile to us, had been assembled at Hyderabad; while another, much more powerful, not only in numbers, but by reason of their complete subserviency to a Mahratta prince of great authority, was ready to enter our territories at a moment's warning. Accounts also were received about this time of Buonaparte's having landed in Egypt; and it was pretty generally believed that his chief object was an attack on British India, through the instrumentality of Persia and the other intervening powers in the north, but mainly by the help of Tippoo in the south. The Mysore country and the Carnatic still contained many French officers, although the armies had been subdued; and the Isle of France possessed ample resources in men, arms, money, and ships, all ready to be put in action to the discomfiture of the British, as soon as measures should be duly prepared for them. Lord Wellesley, therefore, was everywhere surrounded by open as well as by latent dangers, such as were enough to render a secure and lasting peace totally impossible. He gallantly looked all these dangers in the face; and, having resolved to meet them either by war or by negotiation, he arranged his plans in the order most likely to succeed, and determined to act without delay, and in such a manner as should make resistance on the enemy's part hopeless. The first measure, as we have seen, was the destruction of the French force at Hyderabad; the next blow was aimed at Tippoo, and miserably indeed would the governor-general have betrayed the immense trust in his hands had he hesitated over the interpretation of an act of Parliament till that formidable sovereign had collected all his means of offence, foreign as well as domestic, and felt himself equal to the accomplishment of his grand object, the extirpation of the British.

Far from this indolence, and from any idea of shrinking from responsibility, Lord Wellesley, after he had taken a careful survey of the ground, lost not a single moment in bringing the whole resources of the Indian government to bear on the point where he saw it would be most immediately important to make the greatest impression. A large and highly-appointed army, equipped in every possible way for the field, had been speedily but quietly assembled at Madras on the eastern side of the country. Another, not so numerous, but equally complete in all respects, was soon collected at Bombay and despatched to the coast of Malabar on the west, ready to ascend the Ghauts at a given signal. The British forces in the southern parts of the peninsula were in like manner gradually drawn together, and ordered to be ready to move on Mysore. The Nizam's army, and also the English subsidiary force at Hyderabad, were prepared to march from the north the instant they were required.

Lord Wellesley himself now proceeded to Madras, in order to give additional importance to these preparations, and to be ready to lend the weight of his personal influence and authority, either to negotiations or to the approaching military proceedings. In consequence of measures so admirably concerted, there never once arose, at any stage of this memorable campaign, the slightest delay or misunderstanding. Every branch of the service, indeed, civil and military, and every Englishman in India, appears to have been stimulated to unwonted exertion by the local knowledge and the extensive influence of their governor-general, whose talents and promptitude of decision may be said to have rendered the resources of the country doubly effective.

Tippoo was now called upon to explain his proceedings with respect to the mission sent to the Isle of France. His reply was entirely evasive as to the main point—his alliance and intrigues with the French; but he failed not to express great surprise and displeasure at the governor-general's allusion to war, and the vast preparations made all around him. In answer to this shuffling letter, Lord Wellesley stated, in the fullest manner, the grounds of the measures he had adopted; and he very plainly and properly told the Sultan, that his conduct for several years past had been such as to keep not only the British, but their allies, in such eternal alarms, that the whole country was exposed, during a time professedly of profound peace, to all

the solicitude and hazard, as well as much of the expense, of open war. In referring again to that part of Tippoo's proceeding which related to his negotiations with the French, Lord Wellesley very justly said, that new arrangements had become indispensable, in consequence of Tippoo's recent engagements with the common enemy of the British and their allies. His lordship might have added, what, indeed, would have been very imprudent to add, that the extent of the influence and actual force of the French already established in other parts of India rendered it necessary to take prompt measures to prevent the growth of a similar power under Tippoo. But it was no business of Lord Wellesley's to give any such hint of the importance he attached to the growing influence of our enemy, which all along had been his lordship's secret but resolute, and was now his avowed purpose to crush altogether. If, then, Tippoo chose to go along with the French, and to share fortunes with them, it was his own fault. In a letter, dated so late as the 9th of January, 1799, Lord Wellesley repeated his entreaties to Tippoo to meet with cordiality the moderate and sincere advances which were made to him to conclude an amicable arrangement. At the same time, he plainly informed the Sultan, that no further delays could be admitted, and that a final answer must be sent within one day after the receipt of the letter.

What Lord Wellesley would have done had Tippoo met these advances promptly and with a show of sincerity, it is very difficult to say; and probably the most anxious moment of Lord Wellesley's administration was the period between sending this ultimatum to Tippoo and the day on which the answer became due. At all events, no answer was received till several weeks afterwards, during which interval the mighty preparations of the governor-general were all going on silently. The Bombay army moved towards the Malabar mountains, and commenced drawing their heavy cannon up the passes of the Ghauts. The Madras forces in like manner proceeded from the plains of Coromandel towards the steep face which divides the table-land of Mysore from the low grounds. The Nizam's horse and our own Hyderabad subsidiary troops dropped from the north gradually into their appointed stations; while this immense circle of military circumvallation was completed on the south by detachments from all the different districts under our authority in that quarter of India.

At length, on the 13th of February, nearly a month after it was known that Lord Wellesley's letter had been received, Tippoo wrote to his lordship to say, that he was about to proceed on a hunting excursion, and begged the governor-general would send an officer to meet him, slightly attended. To this Lord Wellesley replied, that it was now too late for amicable discussions; but that if Tippoo wished to treat, he must address himself to the commander-in-chief of the armies now on their march, that officer being empowered to enter into an arrangement for the establishment of a secure and permanent peace.

It is interesting to glance at the terms which Tippoo might have obtained at various times during these negotiations, had he chosen to come forward when invited to do so. When Lord Wellesley first arrived in India, and discovered, from the dislocated state of our alliances with the Nizam and the Mahrattas, and the want of adequate military preparations at Madras, that any sudden dash against Tippoo could not safely be contemplated, his lordship would have rested satisfied with the establishment of a British resident at Tippoo's capital Seringapatam, coupled with the entire and immediate removal of every Frenchman in his service, and a solemn engagement to exclude permanently all persons of that nation from his armies and his dominions generally. In the mean time, the news of the invasion of Egypt by Buonaparte arrived, and the expedition was everywhere spoken of in the East as having an ultimate view to the conquest of British India. This made it doubly necessary to curb Tippoo without loss of time; while the brilliant success of the operations at Hyderabad, in disarming the French force, imprisoning the officers, and appropriating the army to ourselves, coupled with the forward state of the military preparations at Madras and Bombay, rendered the accomplishment of Tippoo's subjugation less problematical. The governor-general now resolved, in addition to the terms which he first contemplated, to insist upon Tippoo's exchanging the province of Canara, on the west or Malabar side of India, the only line of sea-coast in his whole kingdom, for an equal extent of territory somewhere else and far inland. This was evidently aimed, as indeed all Lord Wellesley's measures were, against the French intercourse, since by the cession of Canara that nation would be entirely cut off by sea. Last of all, when an overwhelming body of the British troops were fairly put in motion, by several powerful armies hardly seen before, but starting up simultaneously, as if out of the ground, and advancing towards the Sultan's capital and confident of success, Lord Wellesley again enlarged his demands, and instructed his commander-in-chief, if Tippoo showed a desire for peace, to treat with him on quite a new basis. The specific terms were to have depended, in some measure, on the stage of the war at which the negotiations commenced; but in the event of a decided victory, or if the batteries had actually begun to fire on the capital, General Harris was directed to demand the cession of one-half of all Tippoo's dominions, and the payment of a couple of millions sterling, for the expenses of the war; also that four of his sons, and four of his principal officers, should be given up as hostages for the faithful performance of the treaty.

To these mortifying conditions poor Tippoo was never called upon to subscribe; he had set his life upon a cast, and, like another Richard, he was resolved to stand the hazard of the die. He must by this time have begun to discover that, in opposing the new governor-general, he had at length encountered a master-spirit. But what might have been his thoughts had a Seer of his nation dived into futurity, and made him sensible that amongst the foes now marshalled against him was included the future "conqueror of the conqueror of the world?"

The campaign advanced—the siege of the capital was soon undertaken—and at noon on the 4th of May, 1799, only two months after the armies had entered the Mysore territory, the fort of Seringapatam was taken by assault—Tippoo Sultan was

slain—and the brief empire of the house of Hyder subverted for ever!

Had I any other object in view than to give a general sketch of Indian affairs, with an occasional illustration, such as the above, of the actual workings of the system, I might readily add vastly to the interest of this narrative by dwelling on one or more of the campaigns conducted by the Duke of Wellington, then Sir Arthur Wellesley, as narrated by himself in his inimitable Dispatches. But I must here repeat, that it is not my purpose to write a history of India, only to give such notices, from time to time, as may help to render this enormous and complicated topic somewhat less unintelligible than it is generally found to be.

CHAPTER VII.

POLITICAL SETTLEMENT OF MYSORE AFTER THE FALL OF SERINGAPATAM—EXISTING RELATIONS BETWEEN THE BRITISH AND THE DIFFERENT NATIVE POWERS OF INDIA—SKETCH OF THE SUBSIDIARY SYSTEM.

In the wide and wondrous history of British Indian politics, there are few events of more importance than the conquest of Mysore; and perhaps there can hardly be found anywhere an instance in which foresight, temper, and sound wisdom, in all the preparatory measures, were better followed up by promptitude, ability, and resolute courage, as well as perseverance, in the execution of the purposes aimed at. When we come also to examine the results, we shall find in them no less reason to admire the business-like sagacity which marked the very difficult arrangements consequent upon victory. Let theoretical carpers, and verbal critics, say what they please of Lord Wellesley's motives, and his despatches explaining them, there never was a more necessary or a more just war than that against Tippoo—at least, if it was right and expedient for us, consistently with the terms upon which we hold our Eastern empire, to maintain our ground against an implacable native foe, and at the same time to extirpate from those regions the influence of our no less inveterate European enemy. Certainly two such stars as the French and the English could not much longer have kept their course in that sphere; and it became absolutely indispensable to the tranquillity of India that one or other, or both, should give way. The solution of this problem was the task undertaken by the vigorous mind of Lord Wellesley, and one which he not only mastered, but accompanied by various other measures almost of commensurate importance, every one of which was directed towards the grand end of our Indian rule—the happiness and improvement of the natives.

The whole of the extensive territory which, for nearly forty years, had belonged to the recently extinguished Mussulman dynasty, established by Hyder, had fallen, by right of conquest, into the hands of the British and their allies; but it was no easy matter to say how the prize was to be disposed of. As the Nizam fortunately had good sense enough to discover the transcendant abilities of the governor-general, and political wisdom to feel that his best interest lay in reposing unlimited confidence in his great ally, he at once directed his commander-in-chief to acquiesce in any plan of settlement which Lord Wellesley should decide upon respecting the territories of the late sultan. This act of honourable confidence left the governor-general free to make such arrangements as should, in his deliberate opinion, be most consistent with those principles of moderation and justice upon which the war was undertaken. The fact of the Mahrattas having kept aloof from the alliance against Tippoo, freed Lord Wellesley from another awkward entanglement which their claims might have brought with them, had they taken an active share in the war, while it left the governor-general a good opportunity of conciliating those powerful and troublesome marauders, by an act of unextorted and unexpected grace and favour.

As it is not possible to place these matters in a clearer light, or in a more condensed shape, than that in which they have been officially recorded by Lord Wellesley himself, I shall follow Sir John Malcolm's example, and quote verbatim a passage or two from his lordship's admirable despatch to the Court of Directors, dated 3rd August, 1799.

"In regulating the exercise of our right of conquest," says Lord Wellesley, "it appeared to me that no principle could more justly be assumed, than that the original object of the war should constitute the basis of the peace, and of the general settlement of our territorial acquisitions. These objects had been repeatedly declared by the allies to be a reasonable indemnification of our expense in the war, and an adequate security against the return of that danger which originally provoked us to arms. With a view to each of these just and necessary objects, it was requisite that the Company and the Nizam should retain a large portion of the conquered territory; but it required much consideration to determine the precise extent of that portion, as well as the just rule of partition. The war had not been undertaken in pursuit of schemes of conquest, aggrandisement of territory, or augmentation of revenue. In proportion to the magnitude and lustre of our success, it became a more urgent duty to remember, that a peace, founded in the gratification of any ambitious or inordinate view, could neither be advantageous, honourable, nor secure.

"The approved policy, interest, and honour of the British nation required, that the settlement of the extensive kingdom subjected to our disposal, should be formed on principles acceptable to the inhabitants of the conquered territories, just and conciliatory towards the contiguous native states, and indulgent to every party in any degree affected by the consequences of our success.

"To have divided the whole territory equally between the Company and the Nizam, to the exclusion of any other state, would have afforded strong grounds of jealousy to the Mahrattas, and aggrandised the Nizam's power beyond all bounds of discretion. Under whatever form such a partition could have been made, it must have placed in the hands of the Nizam many of the strong fortresses on the northern frontiers of Mysore, and exposed our frontier in that quarter to every predatory incursion. Such a partition would have laid the foundation of perpetual differences, not only between the Mahrattas and the Nizam, but between the Company and both those powers.

"To have divided the country into three equal portions, allowing the Mahrattas (who had borne no part in the expense or hazard of the war) an equal share with the other two branches of the triple alliance in the advantages of the peace, would have been unjust towards the Nizam, and towards the Company impolitic, as furnishing an evil example to other allies in India, and dangerous as effecting a considerable aggrandisement of the Mahratta empire, at the expense of the Company and the Nizam.

"This mode of partition also must have placed Chittledroog, and some of the most important northern fortresses, in the hands of the Mahrattas, while the remainder of the fortresses in the same line would have been occupied by the Nizam, and our unfortified and open frontier in Mysore would have been exposed to the excesses of the undisciplined troops of both powers. The Mahrattas, unquestionably, had no claim to any portion of the conquered territory; and any considerable extension of their empire was objectionable, especially when accompanied by the possession of strong fortresses bordering on the line of our frontier. It was, however, desirable to conciliate their good will, and to offer to them such a portion of territory as might give them an interest in the new settlement, without offence or injury to the Nizam, and without danger to the frontier of the Company's possessions. On the other hand, it was prudent to limit the territory retained in the hands of the Company and of the Nizam, within such bounds of moderation as should bear a due proportion to their respective expenses in the contest, and to the necessary means of securing the future safety of their respective dominions."

After these observations, his lordship concludes this part of the subject by stating, that an attentive investigation of every comparative view of these important questions had *terminated* in his deciding, "that the establishment of a central and separate government in Mysore, under the protection of the Company, and the admission of the Mahrattas to a certain participation in the division of the conquered territory, were the expedients best calculated to reconcile the interests of all parties; to secure to the Company a less invidious, and more efficient share of revenue, resource, commerce, advantage, and military strength, than could be obtained under any other distribution of territory or power, and to afford the most favourable prospect of general and permanent tranquillity in India."

The grand difficulty in Lord Wellesley's case was to know what sort of government to set up in Mysore, or whether to set up any at all—that is, whether or not it might be wise to give that country the name, if not the real substance of an independent kingdom. In the end it was resolved that Kistna Rajee Oudaweer, a child of three years of age, the lineal descendant of the ancient Hindoo family of Mysore, whose power Hyder Ali had usurped in 1761, should be raised to the throne of his ancestors. At the same time, a native of the name of Purneah, a Brahmin of great ability and reputation, who had been the chief financial minister of Tippoo, was appointed dewan, or prime minister, to the young prince.

Most of the historians of India have given the Marquis Wellesley praise for the management of this branch of the question; but, while some consider his motives just, and his proceedings most statesmanlike, there have been others who impugn both. The result, as a matter of fact on the spot, and as a matter of opinion amongst the surrounding nations, is the best criterion, no doubt, by which to judge of this point. To these I shall advert presently. In the mean time, as a wind-up to this hasty view of one of the most interesting, and perhaps amongst the least understood, parts of Indian history, I may briefly glance at the reasonings by which, all things considered, it is probable Lord Wellesley was guided in the political settlement of the Mysore country.

Had Tippoo not been killed at the capture of Seringapatam, considerable embarrassments might have arisen in the settlement of Mysore; and even as it was, there occurred many and great difficulties. The usurpation of Hyder and Tippoo, though the dynasty had subsisted not quite forty years, had lasted long enough to extinguish the hopes of the ancient Hindoo family, while the sons of Tippoo had been brought up in full expectation of succeeding to their father's authority. But if one of these princes had been placed on the throne, he must have consented to a vast diminution of power and territory—for this concession had formed a leading object of the war against his father. Educated, however, as Tippoo's children had been, they would have considered such a condition little short of the most abject and humiliating degradation. In the most narrow view of the subject, as Lord Wellesley remarks, the heir of Tippoo Sultan must have felt a perpetual interest in the subversion of a settlement founded in the partition of his father's dominions. The foundation of such a settlement would have been laid in the principle of its own dissolution. The interests, the habits, the prejudices and passions, the vices, and even the virtues of such a prince, might have concurred to make him cherish an aversion to the English name, and he must have always felt an eager desire to abet the cause of their enemies. A hostile power would thus have been weakened, not destroyed; and a point of union for every turbulent machination would have remained in the centre of the English possessions, especially favourable for the intrigues of the French emissaries.

On the other hand, it was thought that the restoration of the descendant of the ancient Rajahs of Mysore might be recommended by the same course of reasoning which excluded the heir of the usurpation. The kingdom of Mysore, so long the source of calamity and tyranny within its own limits, and of alarm and occasional devastation to all its neighbours, might be rendered, Lord Wellesley thought, a peaceful and happy country in itself, and such as would offer no cause of distrust or fear to other states. These were his chief motives on the score of policy; while considerations of generosity, and its attendant advantages, and those which flow necessarily from acting in conformity with the principles of moral and political rectitude, favoured the restoration of the old Hindoo family. This, then, was determined on; and in the manly spirit of an enlarged policy it was resolved to give the experiment fair play.

The subsidiary treaty of Mysore was accordingly framed in a manner which should establish permanently, as it was hoped, the most perfect commu-

nity of interests between us and the new state. The English government charged itself with the duties of external defence, and by guaranteeing the country from inroads or invasions, gave the most absolute assurance of security to the inhabitants, with whose customs or manners it engaged in no way to interfere. The restored dynasty undertook the whole internal administration of the country—the collection of the revenue, and the military police required in a territory composed of the reunion of a multitude of petty principalities. The natives in Mysore were astonished and delighted, for they had ceased to hope for so complete an emancipation from Mahometan tyranny.

This arrangement has been called an experiment, and justly so; for the re-establishment of a subverted dynasty was a trial of new principles in the administration of our Indian government. "Among the inconveniences of that singular and generally beneficial government," says Colonel Wilks, "established by the British nation in India, is the practice of committing the higher offices of the army and the state, and almost all situations of trust and emolument, to Europeans, and thereby excluding the natives of the country from every object of honourable ambition. The settlement of Mysore was distinguished from all preceding measures of British policy, was greeted with applause in the remotest parts of India, and was acknowledged with unlimited gratitude by the people to be governed, as it left every office, civil and military, to be filled by the natives themselves, with the single guard of those powers of interposition in the internal affairs of the government which were reserved by a special provision of the treaty."

The full difficulty and delicacy of carrying on such a system of government can be appreciated only by persons who are familiar with the numberless occasions upon which the jealousy of the natives is apt to catch fire, or their fears to be roused. Colonel Wilks, who, from long experience, well knew all the intricacies of this very singular experiment in the history of politics, observes, "It is obvious that any ostensible exercise of such a power of interference by the British political resident would have a direct tendency to weaken and subvert the authority of the native government; and that such an interposition, to be efficient to its true purposes, must be delicate, silent, and unobserved. The experiment was new, and with relation to its remote consequences, of momentous importance. Up to the time Lord Wellesley quitted India, in the middle of 1805, or about six years after the death of Tippoo, and the new settlement of Mysore, the success of that arrangement fulfilled his lordship's most sanguine expectations." For a considerable time afterwards things went on pretty well, and even when I visited that country, in 1813 and 1814, all was tranquil, and apparently secure. Of late years, however, the evils essentially inherent in the subsidiary system have made themselves felt, and I fear it cannot be denied, that this great experiment will, in the end, prove a failure. The mismanagement of the Mysore country under the Rajah's government, as I understand, gradually became worse as he advanced in years, and as he released himself from the trammels of his ministers, who previously ruled the country either in direct conjunction with the British resident, or upon a full understanding with the British authorities.

During the greater part of the long minority of the Rajah, the affairs of Mysore were managed by the native dewan, or minister, already named, old Purneah; and the ability of this distinguished statesman being seconded by the talents of some of the most experienced and accomplished of our Eastern diplomatists, Webbe, Close, Wilks, and others, all went on smoothly; but after Purneah's death the Rajah began to exercise the office of sovereign, for which he appears to have been so little qualified, that he brought his country nearly to the verge of ruin; and in order to save it from total anarchy, as well as to secure the numerous advantages we had won by the conquest, we were compelled to occupy it in temporary sovereignty. Whether or not this assumption of the government of Mysore will become permanent, I do not know. I presume that in the end it must be so settled; for it seems well nigh hopeless, according to all experience, to expect that any independent native government will be judiciously administered, when surrounded by other states held in full sovereignty by the British, and so infinitely better managed*.

It would hardly be possible to describe, in popular and intelligible language, the nature and extent of all the various relations which subsist between us and the different native authorities in India; and even if it were possible, I grievously suspect, that so long a story would prove uninteresting to those who happen already to be pretty extensively acquainted with the subject.

Over some of the native states we exercise an undisputed and direct sovereignty, without the interference of any independent native authorities; in others, we have established permanent subsidiary forces, in pursuance of treaties mutually agreed upon; while in several instances, we rely for peace and security upon diplomatic negotiations alone. But it seems highly important to remark, that in the case of every native state with which we have any treaty whatsoever, we are distinctly admitted to possess the right of exercising a decided para-

* P S. 1840.—That these expectations were not ill-founded, will be sufficiently evident from the following testimony of a very competent authority, Mr. C. E. Trevelyan, lately one of the secretaries to the Bengal government in the Political Department. In his examination, in March of this year (1840), before a Committee of the House of Lords, he is asked "What is the state of our relations at present with Mysore? His answer is, "Mysore is a portion of the British dominions in everything except in name. The government is administered by us in every respect. The country is divided into districts, which are managed by the English collectors and magistrates, on the system of our own provinces; and these officers are superintended by a commissioner residing at Bangalore, and are guided by a set of regulations based on our general system. * * There is no native authority whatever employed in Mysore except in strict subordination to us. * * Our occupation of the country is, in effect, permanent. The tenure by which we hold it is very peculiar. It is the continued incapacity of the Rajah to govern his country; but under existing circumstances it is a very secure tenure; there is no probability of the government being given back to the Rajah, and in the event of his decease, the absolute sovereignty would revert to us. The country originally belonged to us, and it would lapse to us as a matter of course."—*Report on the East India Company's Petition by the House of Lords*, ordered by the House of Commons to be printed on the 4th June 1840.

mount influence. In this spirit, we insist upon making ourselves the arbiters in all disputes threatening to disturb the general tranquillity of our own possessions, or of any of those countries whose peaceful condition we have pledged ourselves to maintain.

Without floundering through a wide ocean of details, I could not pretend to describe the particular kind of interference, diplomatic and military, which circumstances have compelled us to adopt from time to time. The cases of hardly any two treaties are exactly alike. Sometimes a simple remonstrance effects all we wish ; while, under circumstances to inexperienced eyes apparently similar, it may become necessary to march twenty thousand men to enforce an award which by treaty we have been called upon to pronounce. It has also happened that we have gone on for a long course of years with some of the states alluded to—for instance with that of the Nizam—without altering in principle our relations, and without any interference, except in the shape of solicited co-operation in settling distracted parts of the country. On the other hand, it has been necessary in some instances actually to interfere, and, for a time, to assume entirely the reins of government of certain states, in order to rescue those countries from the total anarchy into which they had been carried by their native rulers. If I mistake not, this has occurred more than once with the Guicowar's territory, which is indirectly dependent on the Company, and whose affairs, when left to the natives, have always run into disorder, from entire want of method. From the absence also of those habits of good government which the surrounding countries already enjoyed under the British system, the revenue fell far short of the expenditure, and everything else soon went wrong. As it was then found impossible, under such circumstances, for the natives to fulfil the conditions stipulated in their treaties with us, it became not only the right, but the bounden duty of the British government, to interfere. No sooner had the change been made from one set of hands to the other, than confidence seemed to be suddenly restored—the revenue gradually improved —justice, too, being rigidly and honestly administered, and property, as well as person, secured against fraud and violence, all the wonted intercourse of domestic, agricultural, and commercial life re-established itself as if by magic. After a few years of this improved but temporary administration,—which, as I have said, was strictly analogous to that existing in the adjacent countries permanently administered by the British—the Guicowar's affairs became so far restored to order, that the British government, in conformity with the treaty, was obliged to hand it back to its native rulers, who, it seems, plunged it again into disorder, and we have been called upon, I believe several times, to re-occupy the country, to put it to rights.

It is very difficult for persons who have not been over the ground, to recollect the hard names of the numerous different Indian territories in alliance with us, or subjected to our direct control. But if any one will take the trouble to open a map of India, and glance at it while he reads the following brief notice of the relations subsisting between us and the various native powers of Hindustan, I think he will have a tolerably clear general conception of the nature and extent of our Eastern empire.

In the language of the geography books, it may be said that British India is bounded on the north-west by Persia and Kaubul, on the north by Tibet, and on the east by China and the Birman empire ; while a very large proportion of the whole frontier, fortunately for our power, is bounded on the west, south, and east, by the sea.

Poonah, and the ex-Paishwa's territories, so long the scene of Mahratta licence, plunder, and bloodshed, have lately been thoroughly conquered ; and, being occupied by us in sovereignty, they now form an integral portion of the British possessions in India under the Bombay presidency. Those districts, instead of being a terror to all the adjacent states, and a source of constant anxiety to us and to our allies, are peaceably and cordially united in common interests. One small native principality only has not been included in these extensive arrangements, but has been assigned, for good services rendered to us in the war, to the Rajah of Satarah, the descendant of the founder of the Mahratta empire. He has been left independent, except in his foreign relations, and we have guaranteed the security of some of his jagheerdars or feudatory chiefs. The Paishwa's territories have been annexed to Bombay ; and this deposed monarch, once the head of the Mahrattas, resides at Bitore on an allowance of about £100,000 per annum*.

The predatory Mahrattas have been completely subdued ; and those formidable plunderers, the Pindaries, no longer exist, I believe, in name. Within the peninsula, Scindia is the only prince who still retains the character of an independent sovereign in all things, except in what concerns his foreign relations, which, it may be mentioned, once for all, we insist upon taking charge of in the case of every native state with whom we have formed alliances. Scindia, Holkar, and all the other Mahrattas, are therefore so effectually curbed and surrounded by our possessions or those of our allies, that they can no longer engage in predatory excursions. Their attention is, consequently, turned to the arts of peace within their own dominions. This, no doubt, is dull work for people accustomed to rove at large, and plunder whom they pleased ; but the relief to the surrounding states is unspeakable.

With the son of Runjeet Sing at Lahore, with the Nepaul country, and with the Burmese empire lying in opposite directions beyond the skirts of our dominions, and now (1840) with Affghanistan, we maintain relations of amity only. In western India, a large portion of Guzerat, the Concans, all the Poonah states, great part of Kandeish, and of the Deccan, are now provinces subject to our direct sovereignty, under the presidency of Bombay. Canara, Malabar, Coimbetore, the Carnatic, and Bednore, are subject to the government of Madras. Under the presidency of Bengal may be enumerated the huge provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa ; likewise Cuttack, Bundelcund, and Benares.

* P.S. 1840.—It will have been seen by the public papers that the Rajah of Satarah was recently deposed for malpractices ; but this in no respect alters our relations with that state, as his son has been placed on the musnud of his father.

The island of Ceylon is also British, but is directly under his majesty's government, not that of the East India Company. This applies also to the Mauritius or Isle of France, and also to the Cape of Good Hope, but to no other possessions in the East. On the coast of the Malay peninsula, the East India Company possess the island of Pulo-Penang, the fort of Malacca, and the flourishing new settlement at Sincapore, close to the entrance of the China sea. The following list of the principal states forming what is called British India, may be thought interesting.

Native States which have political relations with us, but are not directly under British Protection.

NEPAL.
LAHORE (subject to Runjeet Sing's son*).
CHIEFS OF SCINDE, at the mouth of the Indus.
SCINDIA.
RAJAH OF DHOLPOOP, BAREE, AND RAJAHKAIRAH.
AFFGHANISTAN (1839).

Native States with which Subsidiary Treaties exist.

KING OF OUDE.	
The BOOSLAH, OF RAJAH OF NAGPORE.	
The NIZAM, whose capital is .	Hyderabad.
HOLKAR, ...	Indore.
MYSORE (occupied by the British),	Mysore.
TRAVANCORE, . . .	Trivandrum.
COCHIN, ...	Cochin.
The GUICOWAR, . . .	Baroda.
CUTCH, ...	Bhooj.

Native States under British Protection, but WITHOUT *Subsidiary Treaties.*

BHOPAL.
SIKIM.
The SIKH, or HILL STATES, on the left bank of the Sutlej.
JAUT, and other States, on the right bank of the Jumna.
BOONDELA STATES.
REWAH.
STATES OF RAJPOOTANA.
STATES OF MALWA.
STATES OF GUZERAT.
RAJAH OF SATARAH.
STATES ON THE MALABAR COAST.
STATES ON THE BURMESE FRONTIER.

State Pensioners

The KING OF DELHI.
NABOB OF BENGAL.
NABOB OF THE CARNATIC.
RAJAH OF TANJORE.
The PAISHWAH.
The PRINCES OF THE HOUSE OF TIPPOO.
The EX-RAJAH OF SATARAH (1839).

The subsidiary system alluded to above, undoubtedly carries with it great advantages, and has contributed not a little to the extension of our power in the East. At the same time, it has not been unattended by evils which, it is much to be feared, are inevitable during its continuance, and can only be removed by others of a different, and, as some consider, an aggravated description. The nature of the subsidiary engagements which we make with conquered sovereigns of India, is briefly this :—We take the entire military protection of their countries into our own hands, and while we garrison them with our troops, we place the whole force under the command of our own political residents. We guarantee those countries from all risk of foreign invasion, we permit no domestic revolt, and we agree to co-operate with our joint resources in the event of hostilities with any other nation. The native state agrees to abandon all intercourse with other powers, except through the British government ; it binds itself to refer all disputes to their arbitration ; and it also agrees to receive at court a British resident, through whose medium is imparted the advice and counsel of the British government on all affairs connected with the external, and sometimes with the internal, state of the country. On the other hand, the native princes retain in general the exercise of their independent authority in all civil matters within their dominions.

Thus, with a strong hand, we have succeeded in securing perfect tranquillity. But although the exemption from foreign inroads be an unspeakable blessing, and, perhaps, upon the whole, a far greater good than is counterbalanced by any evils incident to the subsidiary system, still this opinion differs from that of some of our highest authorities on Indian matters. Our assumption of the whole military power of the government effectually puts an end to rebellion, or even to partial insurrection ; but strange as it may at first sight appear, this is not in all cases an advantage. It gives, indeed, a fearful picture of those countries, to learn, that in former times the only check to misgovernment consisted in the insurrection of the mass of the people. In consequence of this power, which could never, under the ancient system, be altogether subdued, the princes of the country knew, that when mismanagement and oppression were carried to a certain extent, there must be revolt, and that they would stand a chance of being tumbled from their thrones. "This check, however," as Mr. Mill truly remarks in his evidence, (16th February, 1832,) "is, by our interference, totally taken away ; for the people know, that any attempt of theirs would be utterly unavailing against our irresistible power ; accordingly, no such thought occurs to them, and they submit to every degree of oppression that befalls them."

We take, as I have mentioned, the whole military power into our hands, while we leave to the native sovereign the entire administration of the civil government, with the exercise of which we are not supposed to interfere. The Rajahs, accordingly, and their ministers, being effectually secured, by our subsidiary forces, against revolt, gradually set about the work of extorting as much money as they possibly can from the people ; and in this way many of the countries with which we have formed this description of alliance have been dreadfully impoverished, and some almost entirely desolated. Under such circumstances, there is seldom even a pretence of any judicial administration—and, indeed, in few purely native states, whether free or subsidiary, is there found any regular establishment for the administration of justice.

It has sometimes happened, when the native prince is a minor, the minister a virtuous and sagacious statesman, and the British resident an officer of great talents and local experience, that the country in which we have placed a subsidiary

* P.S. 1840.—Runjeet Sing, who died about a year and a half ago, has been succeeded by his son Kurruck Sing.

force has been tolerably well administered. This was the case in Mysore for upwards of twenty years, during the lifetime of Purneah. But although the government was managed ostensibly by native authorities, it was in reality administered by the British. Such a combination of favourable circumstances can so seldom be calculated upon, that they furnish no good defence for the subsidiary system.

The following picture by one of the highest of our Indian authorities, Mr. Henry Russell, so long the resident at Hyderabad, shows the unfavourable side of this question in very strong colours.

"One of the most striking effects, perhaps the most striking of all, which a close connection with us, upon the subsidiary system, has produced upon the native states that have embraced it, is the condition of premature decrepitude into which it inevitably hurries them. Every faculty that is valuable to a state, every organ that contributes to its wholesome existence, seems to decay under our alliances. From the moment that we undertake to protect a foreign prince, he ceases to have any inducement to maintain himself. The habit of going upon crutches deprives him of the use of his own limbs. By taking away the occasion, we take away, in the end, all power of exertion. Let a prince in this state of tutelage do what he may, his government must progressively decline. He has no longer anything to hope from good measures, or to fear from bad; he has no longer any inducement to strengthen himself against the hostilities of foreign powers, or to conciliate the affections of his own subjects; all community of interest or of feeling between them is at an end; and having no longer any occasion for their attachment or support, he treats them as if he had none, and exacts, in the shape of revenue, not what they ought to pay, but what he, in his own rapacity, desires to receive. Those impediments which his people, if left to themselves, would raise against him, are prevented or removed by the dread of the exercise of our power, and he proceeds in his course of injustice, violence, and extortion, without any fear of resistance or rebellion." In this way the Mysore country, the Nizam's, the Vizier of Oude's, formerly the Mahrattas, the Guicowar's dominions, and various others, have been going on from bad to worse, under the influence of a system which in its very nature appears incapable of effectual remedy. And it will be seen by the note at page 42, that in the Mysore country the subsidiary system has had its consummation in the entire loss of independence, on the part of the native authorities, and in the occupation of the country by the British. This result to be sure is a great blessing to the natives, but it is not exactly what was anticipated by its founders.

How, it may well be asked, has this strange system arisen? and how is it to be corrected? The establishment of the subsidiary system, I fully concur with Mr. Mill in thinking, has arisen from the nature of the reiterated instructions sent from England not only against wars and conquests, but against extending our territorial relations in any way. Since, however, in spite of all these orders we have been often engaged in wars which it has been absolutely impossible to avoid, territory after territory has fallen into our possession. As it did not suit our fastidious taste to acknowledge these to be conquests, the ingenious expedient of subsidiary protective alliances was resorted to in order to maintain possessions which it would have been utter madness to have relinquished, but which, if taken absolute possession of simply and frankly, would have raised a violent storm of indignation in England. Indirect means were therefore of necessity resorted to, though, in all probability, much more hurtful than those against which the act of parliament was framed.

After examining the subject closely on the spot, and with some care since, I feel no hesitation in saying, that it were far more for the happiness of the natives of India, that, without any subsidiary subterfuges, we should gradually, but as speedily as possible, occupy the whole country in avowed sovereignty; and not only take the military power into our hands, but likewise all the civil branches of the administration, and most especially the judicature. Under the system of exclusive British administration, with all its defects, those parts of the country which have been entirely occupied by us have enjoyed a great degree of happiness and prosperity in all respects, compared with the other states of India. I therefore rejoice to hear that the Mysore country is now in such a condition that it must soon be incorporated with the other states under our direct sovereignty. Those of the Nizam, Oude, and all the rest, will in turn follow the same course. Then, and not till then, can we expect that one uniform system of government in all its branches may be established over British India, and the empire of genuine law and justice be securely fixed amongst the vast population of Hindustan. As it is, we already possess the greater portion of the Peninsula, almost to the foot of the hills in the north; and ere long, no doubt, we shall be the undisputed masters of the whole. This inevitable consequence some very high authorities consider a great evil; while others think that until such absolute sovereignty be fully established over every part of India, it is almost hopeless, and would not be safe, to attempt in earnest to ameliorate the condition of the natives, by entrusting them with high and responsible functions, civil, military, and judicial. It is satisfactory to think that so many experienced persons are of opinion, that after our authority has been thus extensively spread over India, we may with great advantage, as well as perfect security, admit the higher classes of the natives gradually to a considerable share in the civil administration of their own country. All the direct political power we must, of course, reserve in our own hands, probably for a long period of years.

The controversy which is carried on between the various high authorities on this topic, are every way interesting and instructive; but as they are utterly incapable of abridgement, I must refer those who desire further information to the copious evidence taken before parliament during 1830, 31, and 32.

The following chronological table, showing the progress of our power in the East, may be useful for the purpose of reference.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE *of the Acquisitions of the British in India.*

DATES OF TREATY.	DISTRICTS.	FROM WHOM ACQUIRED.
1757. Dec. 20.	Twenty-four Pergunnahs in Bengal	Meer Jaffier Khan, Nabob of Bengal.
1759. May 14.	Masulipatam, &c.	The Nizam.
1760. Sept. 27.	Burdwan, Midnapoor, and Chittagong.	Cassim Ali, Nabob of Bengal.
1765. Aug. 12.	Bengal, Bahar, &c.	The Great Mogul.
1765. Aug. 30.	Company's Jaghire, in the vicinity of Madras.	Nabob of Arcot.
1766. Nov. 12.	Northern Circars.	The Nizam.
1775. May 21.	Zemindary of Benares.	Vizier of Oude.
1776. May 22.	Island of Salsette.	Mahrattas.
1778. June 17.	Nagore.	Rajah of Tanjore.
1778. Sept. 18.	Guntoor Circar.	Nizam.
1786.	Island of Pulo-Penang.	King of Queda.
1792. Mar. 17.	Malabar, Salem, Dindigul, and Baramahl.	Tippo Sultan, by treaty.
1799. July 13.	Coimbatoor, Canara, and Wynaad.	Conquered from Tippoo.
1799. Oct. 25.	Tanjore.	Rajah of Tanjore.
1800. Oct. 12.	Districts acquired by the Nizam from Tippoo Sultan in 1790 and 1799, and since ceded to us.	Nizam, in exchange for other territories.
1801. July 31.	The Carnatic,	Azeem ul Dowlah, Nabob of the Carnatic.
1801. Nov. 10.	Goruckpoor, Lower Doab, Bareilly, &c.	Vizier of Oude.
1802. Dec. 31.	Part of Bundelcund.	Paishwah.
1803. Dec. 17.	Kuttack and Balasore.	Rajah of Berar.
1803. Dec. 30.	Upper part of the Doab, and Delhi territory.	Dowlut Rao Scindia.
1805. April 21.	Districts in Guzerat.	Guicowar.
1815. Dec. 2.	Kumaon, and part of the Terraie.	Nepal.
1817. June 13.	Saugur, Huttah, and Darwar.	Paishwah.
1817. Nov. 6.	Ahmedabad Farm.	Guicowar.
1818. Jan. 6.	Candeish, &c.	Holkar.
1818.	Ajmere.	Scindia.
1818.	Poonah, Konkun, & Southern Mahratta country.	Conquered from the Paishwah.
1818. Dec. 1.	Ceded Districts on the Nerbudda, Sumbhulpoor, & Patna.	Rajah of Berar.
1820. Dec. 17.	Lands in Southern Konkun.	Rajah of Sawuntwarree.
1822. Dec. 12.	Districts in Beejapoor and Ahmednuggur.	The Nizam.
1824. Aug. 2.	Singapore.	Rajah of Johore.
1825. April 9.	Malacca.	Dutch.
1826. Feb. 24.	Lower Assam, Arracan, Tavoi, Ye, and Tennasserim	King of Ava*.

* P.S. 1840.—To this list of places acquired by the British in the East, there may now be added the port and fortifications of Aden, on the south coast of Arabia, near the entrance of the Red Sea, in 1839. This possession has become almost indispensable to the security and certainty of the important steam communication recently established between England and her Indian dominions, *via* the Mediterranean, Egypt, and the Red Sea.

Perhaps, too, I ought to add Mysore to the list of our Indian possessions, since in effect we have taken the entire administration of that country into our hands. See the note to page 42.

CHAPTER VIII.

EXTENT, POPULATION, AND REVENUES OF BRITISH INDIA—THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM—EMPLOYMENT OF THE NATIVES IN OFFICES OF TRUST.

THE population of the territories forming British India, in 1830, was somewhat less than ninety millions (strictly 89,577,206) of souls, while the area was rather more than half a million (strictly 514,190) square miles†. The extent of the allied and protected states is still greater; and the two taken together occupy a surface of 1,128,800 square miles. (See p. 333 of First Appendix to the Third Report of the Committee of the House of Commons, October 1831.) The native army, officered by British, consists of more than one hundred and ninety thousand men; the European troops employed in India, of about twenty-seven thousand. The Company's civil servants are in number about eleven hundred; the English officers belonging to the native army of the East India Company, upwards of four thousand; and those of the Queen's troops, about one thousand‡. Besides these, there are between two and three thousand other British residents in India, formerly licensed by the Company, but who now reside there by right.

The revenues of India are derived chiefly from a land-rent; but the profits on the sale of salt and opium, together with the ordinary customs, form large items.

The gross revenues of the three presidencies, and the subordinate settlements, during the fifteen years ending in 1828-29, were 311,083,400*l.*; being, upon an average, 20,738,893*l.*, or rather more than twenty millions annually.

The following statement for the year 1828-9 will show the proportions in which the revenue is derived from different sources :—

Mint receipts	£19,414
Post-office	135,617
Stamps	368,431
Judicial	126,464
Land revenue	12,895,366
Syer and Abkaree	861,196
Small farms, licences, and moturpha, or tax on professions	152,780
Ceded territories on the Nerbudda	457,923
Burmese cessions	117,326
Subsidies from Mysore, Travancore, and Cochin	392,355
Salt	2,700,147
Opium	1,930,891
Tobacco	85,128
Customs	1,869,634
Marine	77,767
Profits of the Madras government bank	10,013
Extraordinary receipts from Ava, Bhurtpore, and Scindia, and from the Madras Native Pension Fund	491,249
Making the total revenue in 1828-9	£22,691,721

Or more than twenty-two millions and a half sterling.—*See p. 32, Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons, ordered to be printed 16th August, 1832.*

† P.S. 1840.—I have not been able to form any correct estimate of the increase which has taken place in India during the last six or eight years, and I learn that no official census has been made.

‡ In the "Naval and Military Gazette, and East India

The following table shows the average charges for the three years which ended 1827-8, a period which included the costly war against the Burmese :—

Average Annual Amount of the Gross Charges of the Indian Territory for the three years 1825-28.

Civil, revenue, judicial, and marine .	£8,305,065
Advances for salt and opium, and charges	1,291,434
Military	11,731,092
Buildings and fortifications . . .	724,291
Interest on debt	1,748,513
Political charges in England . .	2,102,422
Average annual charges . . .	£25,902,817

These two statements have been selected with no particular view ; but they will serve to give a tolerably correct general idea of the details of the revenue and expenses of India.

In an estimate made by order of the House of Commons of the probable receipts and expenditure of the Company, at the expiration of the present charter, and printed in the first Appendix to their Third Report of 1831, p. 10, the revenue is divided into different heads. By this, it appears that the whole may be taken at very nearly eighteen millions sterling (17,936,219*l.*), eleven and a half of which are derived from the land ; three and a half millions from salt and opium ; and a million and a half from the customs ; the rest being derived from the post-office, the mint, duty on stamps, and various other minor sources.

The total estimated charges in India alone are given at nearly seventeen millions (strictly 16,863,949*l.*) Of these, the military expenses are nearly seven millions ; the collection of the land revenue and the customs rather more than two millions and a half ; the judicial expense about a million and one-third. The expense of the civil establishments is estimated at not quite a million and a half ; and that of the salt, opium, and the marine establishments, at about a million and a half. The interest of debts is calculated at rather more than two millions ; the remainder of the charges being made up of the expenses of the various public offices. The charges in England, including the interest on debts, amount to considerably more than two millions and a half (2,685,459*l.*), making the grand total of charges 18,763,517*l.*, and the gross revenue 17,936,217*l.* Thus, it is reckoned, that the excess of charges over the gross revenue of India, at the expiration of the present charter, will be 827,300*l.* per annum.

In the above statements, no account is taken of the profits or losses incident to the trade of the Company. During the ten years which elapsed from 1819 to 1829, their average annual loss by the trade to India appears to have been upwards of two hundred thousand pounds, and their profit by the exclusive trade to China not quite one million annually. The commercial receipts of the Company, however, are derived from several sources beside their China and India trade. They receive a profit from the management of private trade goods, from the employment of their own ships, from interest on annuities and on government stock, and from interest on advances to the territorial branch.

Taking all these items together, we learn from the Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons, ordered to be printed 16th August, 1832, that

The average annual profit on the India and China trade during the fifteen years, from 1814 to 1829, was	£1,009,047
Annual average of all other sources of profit	356,844
Total	£1,365,891

It will easily be understood, that in such a sketch as this it is impossible to enter further into the financial and commercial details of the Company's concerns*.

The methods of collecting the land revenue vary so much in different parts of India, that I find it impossible to give, in any reasonable compass, an intelligible sketch of the mode of levying it. Lord Cornwallis, in 1793, established what is called the Permanent Settlement. Under it, in the provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, a great part of the land was to be held by persons called *zemindars*, in perpetual hereditary possession, on condition of their paying a certain permanent revenue to government. But in the more recently acquired territories under the presidency of Bengal, no fixed agreement has been made with the zemindars or landholders. Many authorities are of opinion, that it would be desirable if the demands of the government could be everywhere fixed in perpetuity ; but others think this measure would be injurious both to the government and to the people. At all events, the local difficulties have proved so very numerous and complicated, and the circumstances relating to the countries falling successively under our direct control so fluctuating, that it has been found best, upon the whole, to adopt, generally speaking, the system of temporary settlements. In some places this is arranged by villages ; in others, bargains are made directly with the individual cultivators of the soil, or ryots, as they are called. In many parts of India leases have been granted ; but the ryotwar system of annual settlements seems most in favour at present. In some districts, a proportion of the produce, commuted into a money-payment, constitutes the revenue ; in others, a rate per acre is levied. In one way or the other, as I have already shown, the land is the grand source of revenue. Part of the Madras presidency is under the zemindary settlement, and from it is collected about one million sterling of revenue. But the

and Colonial Chronicle," (a journal of high authority,) I find, on the 11th July, 1840, the following statement:—The Bengal army numbers 102 battalions or regiments of regular troops, and 21 of irregular horse or foot,—100,000 men. Madras counts 72 regiments and 1 irregular corps, about 60,000 men. Bombay counts 39 regiments and 5 or 6 police corps, about 35,000 men.—In all, about 195,000 men. This does not include 23 regiments of infantry and 4 of cavalry, of the Queen's troops. One quarter of the whole number of officers may be always deducted for those absent on leave, or by reason of sickness.

* P.S. 1840.—I refrain, with some reluctance, from adverting to the circumstances consequent upon the change from the Company's monopoly of the China trade, to the opening of that commerce. It may be fairly urged, however, by the opponents of that measure, that things have not, *as yet*, been improved by it, either politically or commercially.

ryotwar system prevails generally in the countries under that presidency. The "Permanent Settlement" has not, I believe, been tried except in Bengal, and a part of the Madras territory. Under the presidency of Bombay, both the zemindar and the ryotwar system are in use. By the ryotwar system, the cultivators make their bargains from year to year with the collector on the part of the government; and it is generally considered that much good springs from this personal and recurring communication with the ruling authorities. Upon the whole, it appears, that it is not so much upon the particular system that the efficiency of the collection depends, but upon the moderate amount of the assessment, and the accurate registration in the village accounts of the cultivator's rights, and the sums to be levied.

It may be observed, that no religious distinction interferes with the right of holding property in land. Europeans, Americans, and all other foreigners whatsoever, were formerly interdicted, by act of parliament, from becoming proprietors in the soil, except within the small circle of the local jurisdiction of the British courts of law, established at the presidencies.*

People who have not attended to Indian subjects, can form no conception of the boundless trouble which has been taken by the East India Company to investigate the revenue system, or of the talents and unwearied patience displayed by their servants in these researches. If it were possible to draw up a brief abstract of the reports of Munro, Elphinstone, Malcolm, Chaplin, Fullarton, Mackenzie, and many other able men on this curious topic, the result could not fail to teach moderation to those who censure at random whatever is done in the East, where, in fact, the chief object of the Company has been to meet the views and tastes, and to study the old usages and prejudices of the natives, as far as possible, consistent with good government†.

The same praise—for praise it is of a very high order—may be given to the Company and their officers, for their unceasing anxiety to place the judicial system of those parts of India subject to their rule, under as fair and equitable a course of administration as the extraordinary nature of circumstances in that quarter of the globe renders possible. The merits and demerits of the native systems of judicature, as compared with that of the British, and the theoretical advantages and practical absurdities of both, together with the possibility of improving our judicial system, have for many years formed, and still form, subjects of animated, but amicable controversy amongst the best-informed and most experienced writers, who, from studying the subject in all its bearings, not only on the spot, but in England, are the best qualified to form an opinion upon it. If, however, an attempt were to be made to separate the parts of this vast topic, and to apply different views to different territories, there would be little chance of rendering it intelligible, without entering, in the first instance, into such minuteness of detail as would probably fatigue the attention of most inquirers, and perhaps eventually disincline them to examine with interest the more inviting and not less important branches of the subject.

It may be mentioned, however, that there exist in India two separate systems of judicature—the king's or supreme courts, and those of the Company. The jurisdiction of the supreme court extends to Europeans generally, and, within certain limits, round the presidencies, to natives also. The jury system, as it prevails in England, is confined entirely to districts within the jurisdiction of the supreme courts.

In the Company's courts there are three different classes of European judges; 1st, Those of districts, or Zillahs; 2d, The provincial judges; and, 3d, The judges of the Sudder Adawlut, or highest court. The duties of the supreme court, as presenting nothing very peculiar, need not be further described; but it may not be uninteresting to glance slightly at the construction of the judicial system first regularly established in Bengal in 1793, for the administration of justice in the territories under our direct control, and which have been extended, from time to time, to other provinces since acquired by cession or conquest.

In each district, or Zillah, and in certain large cities, a civil court has been established, of which

* P.S. 1840.—By the Act of 1833, by which the East India Company hold their new charter, authority was given them to allow Englishmen and others, being British subjects, to hold landed property in India.—See clause 86. This permission has been recently acted upon (1837) by the several governments in India; so that now every British subject, in whatever country born, or of whatever complexion or shade of colour, may hold landed property in any part of the Company's settlements in India.

† P.S. 1840.—The persons holding lands in Bengal under "the Permanent Settlement" alluded to above, have of course not been disturbed in their possessions; but I understand that of late years—indeed since Lord Auckland commenced his administration—a new and important system has been introduced into Bengal of letting lands to the natives, on long leases, running to twenty and even thirty years. This plan, it is said, promises to work exceedingly well, as it gives the tenants a guarantee for the profitable use of any capital they may choose to lay out on their farms. It will be not a little interesting to watch the progress of an experiment in Asia, which has been found to answer so well in Scotland—under circumstances, no doubt, very dissimilar in many respects, but perhaps not less true to nature, in the main, in the one case than in the other.

On this score, as well as on many others, every one must rejoice to learn, from good authority, that the effect of the new era of security of persons and property, contrasted with the dreadful state of anarchy of past times, in those parts of India which we have taken under our powerful protection, has been to quicken industry. Mr. Trevelyan says, in his evidence before the House of Lords, in 1840, that "Up to the last Mahratta war Central India was so much laid waste by the Pindaries, that the inhabitants were obliged to get not only their sugar, tobacco, and indigo, but also their corn, from the valley of the Ganges; but since Central India has been settled, a proper division of labour has begun to take place, and now we (that is, Bengal) import corn from Central India, and they take our sugar, tobacco, &c. to a greater extent than ever."—*Lords' Report*, page 88. In like manner he states, "that since the navigation of the Jumna and the Ganges has been fully opened by the protection afforded by our government, the territories of the whole of the countries in Upper India, as far as the Punjab and the Indus, and even the whole of Central Asia, as far as the frontiers of Russia, are supplied with sugar from the Benares district!" These and a thousand other instances may well be set off against any or all of the evils incident to our Eastern administration, which, with all its faults, is the wonder and admiration of all the world who are acquainted with the facts!

one of the Company's servants is appointed judge; and to aid him in the exercise of his functions, a Registrar, with one or more European assistants, are named from the Company's civil service. The office of Registrar, however, has been in a great measure discontinued of late years. To each Zillah and city court are also appointed natives, duly qualified to expound the Hindoo and Mussulman law in cases which turn upon those codes. These natives are, moreover, empowered to decide suits referred to them by the Zillah judge. Native commissioners have been appointed within convenient distances from the Zillah courts, for determining suits of a smaller amount. These native judges can try causes as far as five hundred rupees, or fifty pounds; and the amount may be increased, at the recommendation of the European judge, as far as five thousand rupees, or five hundred pounds; but I believe this varies under the different presidencies. These commissioners, who are selected by the Zillah judges, but subject to the approbation of the superior courts, are paid partly by salary, and partly by fees on the sums litigated before them. They act essentially the part of arbitrators, and their mode of proceeding is summary. An appeal lies from these native courts to the Zillah courts, whose decisions are final, except in certain special cases.

Lord Cornwallis also established four provincial courts of appeal, to each of which were appointed three judges, chosen from the civil department of the Company's service; a Registrar, with one or more assistants from the junior branch of the service; besides several expounders of the native law—a Cauzee and Moftee for the Mahometan law, and, of course, a "learned Pundit" for that of the Hindoos. There are now (1830) six provincial courts in the provinces attached to the Bengal presidency, viz. Calcutta, Dacca, Moorshedabad, Patna, Benares, and Bareilly. Various other modifications of these courts have taken place since that time; but at present they not only exercise an appellate jurisdiction over the decisions of the Zillah courts, but even take cognizance of those causes which have been brought up to the Zillah courts on appeal from the decisions of the native commissioners. They may either take fresh evidence, or send such causes back to the original court for further investigation. All original suits, exceeding five thousand rupees, are instituted and tried in the provincial courts. But in the event of a pressure of business, suits amounting to fifty thousand rupees may be tried in the first instance by the court about to be described, to which appeals lie from all the provincial courts.

The higher tribunal, established at the presidency of Calcutta, is called the Sudder Dewanee Adawlut, and is the ultimate court of appeal; its judgments being final and conclusive within certain limitations prescribed by act of parliament. This court consists of as many judges as the governor-general in council may, from time to time, deem necessary for the despatch of business. The number of judges at present is five. In cases where the property in dispute exceeds fifty thousand rupees, an appeal even from this high court may be carried to the King of England in council.

Various important changes have recently been made, and are now in progress, with regard both to the constitution and jurisdiction of the tribunals above described; but this brief notice will, I trust, be found sufficiently accurate and minute for general inquirers. The objects which the changes alluded to are intended to promote, are, the more prompt administration of justice, and a more extended employment of natives in the performance of judicial functions.

One of the principal difficulties attendant upon the working of the judicial system consists in the comparative ignorance in which an Englishman necessarily must ever remain of the language, manners, customs, and, above all, the religious tenets and practices of the natives. And, on the other hand, it is not very easy to command, as speedily as could be wished, the full assistance of the natives in a judicial capacity, since the state of political subordination in which they have been kept so long has in a great degree broken down those habits of confidence and self-esteem which are required in such cases. I feel quite incompetent to give an opinion upon the details of this very difficult and delicate point; but the employment of the natives in judicial and other situations of responsibility appears to furnish one of the best means by which, in time, the native character may be raised in the scale of society, and the intelligent and educated classes of Hindoos and Mussulmen enabled to discover many generous and honourable motives to exertion in a field from which they are now too much excluded.

In the administration of criminal justice the courts are guided generally by the Mahometan law, excepting in cases wherein a deviation from it may have been expressly authorised by the regulations of government. For some years after we acquired possession of the Dewanee, or right of collecting the revenues of Bengal, (1765,) the administration of criminal justice was left very much to the exclusive management of the natives, the influence of the Company's servants being then exerted only to remedy the gross defects of the law, or to promote its due execution. Subsequently, however, courts of criminal jurisprudence were established in each district under the denomination of Foujdary Adawlut, and a superior court called the Nizamut Adawlut at head-quarters. These courts, which were under the entire management of the natives, failed to produce the good effect which was looked for; and, in 1793, Lord Cornwallis changed the whole system. The Zillah judges were constituted magistrates for taking cognisance of criminal matters in the districts where they were respectively stationed. This has been found to answer so well, that it has been greatly extended since. All subjects of the British government not being Europeans, that is, who are natives of the territories forming British India, are amenable to these courts for crimes committed by them within the limits of the East India Company's territorial possessions, beyond the boundaries of the presidency. European subjects resident in the territories of the Company, under the presidency of Bengal, were amenable only to the Supreme Court of judicature at Calcutta, antecedent to the act of 1813. But by that act all Europeans are declared, to a certain extent, subject to the authority of the local magistrate, on complaint by a native of India in any part of the country. It would only confuse matters to enter

into the details of the circuit courts, the court of Nizamut Adawlut, and the various police establishments ;—it is enough to mention, that the system has proved effectual in securing the internal tranquillity of the country, and in establishing a degree of security for persons and property heretofore totally unknown in Hindustan.

The courts for the administration of civil and criminal justice under the presidencies of Madras and Bombay, do not vary materially from those of Bengal; and a revised system of police has of late years been introduced in many parts of the country.

Besides the judicial arrangements above alluded to, established by the British rulers of India in their provinces, there exists also, under their sanction, in some parts of the country, (the Madras presidency, for example,) a purely native system for the decision of civil suits. This is known by the name of Punchayet, I believe from the word "punch"—five—that being the general number of which this native court consists, though it often happens that they consist of one friend chosen by each of the litigants, and a third by the head of the village, or some one of the native authorities. This system has received the sanction and support of the Madras government, where alone I believe the experiment has been fully tried, of allowing the administration of justice to rest with the natives alone.

The merits of Punchayets, or native juries, as they have been sometimes called, has for some years past formed a subject of very animated controversy amongst the highest authorities in India. Some statesmen of great experience have strongly recommended the recognition and establishment of Punchayets, as more conformable, upon the whole, to the tastes and feelings of the natives, and more likely to lead to the correct administration of justice than our own Zillah courts. Other authorities declare, that the experiment of Punchayets has failed in every instance in which it has been tried under our auspices. When, in place of this new device, the powerful influence of the British rulers established a regular system of judicature, although in many respects defective and repugnant to the habits of the natives, it was eagerly and almost universally resorted to in preference.

The best proof of the superiority, upon the whole, of the English system, in the opinion of the natives themselves, when compared with their own Punchayets, is found in their preferring the Zillah courts wherever they have a free choice open. A high Indian authority, Mr. R. Fullerton, in some interesting remarks on this subject, says, "The Punchayet has now been legalised under prescribed law, and under fixed and definite rules; it has been declared a part of the common law of the country; means of reverting to it have been provided, and at a lower charge than other process; and yet it appears, that out of an aggregate of seventy-one thousand and fifty-one causes decided, only three hundred and sixty-two have been submitted to Punchayets, and three hundred and fourteen decided by that process—a result which incontestably proves that the natives do not attach to that mode of adjudication the respect and importance which many supposed. Indeed it was, like many other native practices, a mere expedient in the absence of any settled system of judicature, resorted to in times of anarchy, confusion, and comparative barbarism, when no form of judicial process existed; and it is, therefore, not surprising that the practice should have ceased with the establishment of a regular system of adjudication. The result, indeed, corresponds exactly with what was to be expected.

"The trial by Punchayet has been declared to be the common law of India; and it has been argued that it could not be said the natives had the benefit of their own laws, under a system which did not include as a part the adjudication by Punchayets. It is perfectly clear that their predilection for Punchayet arose from the circumstance of there being no other mode of adjudication. The creditor relied on his own exertions for the recovery of debts due to him; he placed peons over his debtor, or he set himself down at the door until the debt was paid. To relieve himself from the importunities of the creditor, the debtor, if he disputed the demand, applied for a Punchayet to adjust it. The practice was not the result of a plaintiff seeking recovery of his just debts, but of the debtor seeking temporary relief from the pressure of personal demand."—*Selection of Papers*, 1826, vol. iv. p. 52.

Of the total number of causes decided in India in the year 1827, viz. 340,000, I understand there were only 700 determined by the Punchayets, while all the rest were adjudicated by the Zillah and other courts established by the Company.

It seems well worthy of remark, that the expense of these native courts is exceedingly small; while, in those under the British direction, it is considerable. In fact, in most cases, justice, or what is so called, is administered gratis in the native court; whereas, in that under the British authority, there is always some fee. According to superficial seeming, therefore, it might be supposed, that in the native courts justice was more easily obtained and really preferable to that under British influence; but, if any value is to be attached to facts, and if litigants be allowed to be the most proper persons to speak on such an occasion, the above striking results would seem to demonstrate that the cheapness or dearness of justice—that is of real, substantive justice—is not to be measured by the quantity of money paid for it. Or rather, its goodness or real worth is not to be estimated by its mere cheapness or dearness, measured in money. For my own part, after a pretty extensive course of observation, not only in the East Indies and in many other countries, but in that pestilent hot-bed of litigation, the United States of North America, I feel satisfied, that of all the fallacious cants by which people who do not often observe and think for themselves have been misled, one of the most delusive and practically mischievous is that which cries up what is so insidiously called "cheap justice." No greater misnomer, I am persuaded, has ever been palmed upon mankind, than is implied by this expression. Nor, perhaps, has the mere force of words, without any solid meaning to back them, anywhere contributed more essentially to disturb the even course of fair dealing between man and man. The diminution, below certain reasonable limits, in the expenses of process and other devices, by which law, or rather its forms, have been rendered

available to every man who happens to fancy himself aggrieved, so far from being a blessing, is substantially a real curse to those countries in which such facilities have been unduly afforded. The phrase of "bringing justice home to every man's door," sounds very finely in the abstract; but if the result be, that, in a village heretofore peaceable and contented, every man is in consequence set by the ears with his neighbour, where is the gain? or what satisfaction is it to the wretch who is beggared to be told, that everything has been determined strictly according to law, and that the fees by which his money, his time, and his peace of mind, have been melted away, though numerous, have been each of them small?

The real excellence of that branch of the judicial system in India to which I have alluded as falling more immediately under the British influence, consists in its being essentially arbitrative in its character. The Zillah courts are, in fact, though not in name, courts of compromise, in which an honest arbiter decides between two contending parties, very much according to the reason of the thing, with only so much reference to the native law of the case, as may be useful in determining the actual nature of the point in dispute. This system, it is highly important to observe, could only be productive of real justice when its practical administration rests with disinterested men of character, who fill situations, the whole importance of which, either as to profit or reputation, or the prospects it holds out, turns upon public opinion alone. Were the despotism of mere brute force, such as ruled India formerly, to interfere with the courts of justice, nothing could be worse; but if, in point of fact and daily practice, the decisions are given in a manner approved of by the natives themselves; and if the power of these courts extends to the governors as well as the governed, and makes no distinction between the native and the foreigner, but visits all with impartiality,—the empire of justice is more completely established than it ever was under the sway of the most potent despot that has yet ruled the Eastern world.

It is very true, that, for a long time, the natives could not bring themselves to believe it possible that their rulers would deal fairly by them in cases where one of the parties was English, the other a Hindoo or a Mussulman. But having gradually gained experience, by watching the invariable uniformity of the practice of the Zillah and other courts under the British influence, they have come in the end to see, and practically to feel and understand, as well as to admit, the superior advantages which they derive from trusting to the systematic intregrity, if I may so call it, of the foreign authorities, in contradistinction to the corrupt, or, at best, uncertain and fluctuating motives which used to influence their own native courts.

It is by no means pretended by those who uphold the judicial system of India, that very many improvements may not be introduced by degrees into its practice; neither is it denied, even by its warmest advocates and admirers, that there exist in it evils which claim the deepest consideration of our Eastern government. The number of judges is so much too small, that causes inevitably run into arrears; and the occasional ignorance of the native languages and usages—to say nothing of the want of familiarity with the native laws, which must belong to many of our judges and magistrates—often causes considerable embarrassment. Still, when *everything is* taken into consideration, it will be found that there is much solid justice and practical equity dispensed by the courts under the British judicial system.

The Mahometan criminal law is in force in the greater part of the provinces under the Bengal and Madras governments, though it has been from time to time very greatly modified by the interference of the British; under the Bombay presidency, the law of the religion of the party is generally administered—the Mahometan law to the Mahometans, the Hindoo law to the Hindoos, and that of England to the Parsees and Christians. The Mahometan and Hindoo criminal codes, however, have been greatly modified by the regulations of government, and many of their defects and absurdities corrected. At Bombay a criminal code has been recently compiled, which is applied to all sects; and even in Bengal and Madras, the Mahometan law is administered more in name than in substance. On a person being convicted, the proper native law-officer expounds the law, assigns the punishment which the Mahometan codes award to the offence; but the Futwa, or exposition of the law, always closes with a remark, that it depends on the government to determine whether that punishment or some other shall be inflicted. The English judges have, therefore, in point of fact, the power of adapting the punishment to the nature and degree of the offence, and to the peculiar circumstances of the case. Scarcely any other crimes than murder, and robbery under aggravated circumstances, are punished capitally; and, upon the whole, crimes are comparatively few in India. About one hundred and twenty capital convictions occur annually, of which the greater number are carried into effect*.

All parties seem now agreed, that it is highly desirable that natives of talent, education, and patriotic spirit, should be placed as much as possible in offices of trust and emolument. At present, unfortunately, the most intelligent and aspiring men amongst them can look to no offices worthy of their talents; but the time, we may surely trust, must one day come, if it has not already arrived, when they may safely and usefully be admitted to a fellowship in labour with ourselves in administering the affairs of their own

* P.S. 1840.—I thought at one time of giving a brief abstract of some proposals which have recently been made for re-arranging the judicial system of India; but as I learn that not much has yet been done in the way of actual change, (except the extension of the jurisdiction of the Company's civil courts to Englishmen,) I do not feel called upon to advert to mere suggestions, however judicious or essential they may appear to good government, but which, before they come into actual practice, may receive many modifications. It is satisfactory to know, however, that the talents and extensive knowledge of Mr. Macaulay, to which are now added observations on the spot, have been directed to the preparation of a penal code; and that his able Report on the subject has had the effect of bringing it more under the consideration of those authorities whose duty it will be to give practical operation to such parts of his enlightened views, as far as they may be found consistent with the general administration of our vast Eastern empire.

country. If, as we suppose, the true interest and most secure happiness of India are best served by the general system now adopted by us, this important fact cannot be less clearly seen by the able and virtuous men of that country than it is by us; and if so, they will surely have at least as great an interest as any foreigners can have in maintaining the system entire. The personal attachment, however, of the superior order of natives to our government cannot well be much less than it now is, seeing that we exclude them from almost every fair road of ambition. But if the clever and upright men amongst them were once rendered eligible to situations of trust and respectability, as well as of profit and fame, and appointed only according to their abilities and character, there can be little doubt that their devotion to our cause, which is now only a matter of cold approval—from being better than the old systems of anarchy or despotism, would then become a sincere and hearty co-operation. With respect to the working classes, who form the great mass of the people of India, it appears to be considered by themselves a matter of very little consideration who governs them, provided they are freely allowed to follow their own customs, and are not interfered with in any of their religious usages—they look to the person immediately over them, and look no further.

It is extremely gratifying to find that many of the best local authorities on Indian topics who have been examined before Parliament during the recent investigations, give it as their unqualified opinion, that the natives might not only be safely trusted in certain offices, but that they ought to be placed at once in those offices, not merely on their account, but on our own. In the opinion of the most experienced persons, many, if not all the courts of original jurisdiction, both civil and criminal, might, with great propriety, be put entirely under native judges, with nothing more than a general superintendence on the part of the British authorities. At the same time, it seems indispensable that the ultimate appellate jurisdiction should always rest with the government.

One gentleman of great experience, Mr. David Hill, now one of the secretaries of the East India House, in his evidence before the committee of the House of Commons, 30th March, 1832, says,—"I conceive that throughout the provinces justice ought to be administered by natives, who are to be found perfectly competent to the office; that there should be a gradation of native judicatories, one class having jurisdiction over another; and that the operations of the whole should be superintended by British functionaries, who should connect the system of internal administration with the government which rules the empire. For I look upon India," he adds, "entirely as a conquered country, which cannot enjoy the advantages of a constitution of balance and check among its several parts, but must be kept under an absolute government."

It seems, indeed, preposterous to expect that a despotism like that of our government in India can be maintained, like a free constitution, upon a system of balance and check among its parts; and it is equally absurd to expect that a handful of foreigners, who go to India merely for a part of their lives, in order to carry away a competence to maintain them in another country, should govern that gigantic empire, either physically or morally, otherwise than through the instrumentality of its own inhabitants.

"If," says the same authority most judiciously, "the natives are inferior to us in point of integrity, that defect can be remedied only by the exercise and discipline of their moral faculties; and in the mean time, under European superintendence, and with proper checks, it need not prove a bar to their usefulness. The experience, however," he adds, "acquired at Madras, where native agency has been largely resorted to for more than twelve years in judicial duties, does not justify the apprehension that natives are liable to prove corrupt judges. During that period they have decided on an average upwards of 60,000 suits in the year, to the general and growing satisfaction both of the people and of their official superiors."—*Minute by D. Hill, Esq., 8th March*, 1830.

It is, indeed, almost self-evident, that in a country held by right of conquest and by the power of the sword, the judicature ought not to be left independent of the control of government. There is no public opinion in the mass of society to control it, and the courts may, with the best intentions, operate in a manner totally at variance with the whole end of the government of the country, and with the system on which the administration of its affairs is conducted. The government ought, therefore, to possess the means of staying the proceedings of the courts of justice; and the decrees of the ultimate tribunal ought never to be executed without being previously made known to them, that they may interpose their authority if they see occasion, or think that the safety of the state and the general welfare of the community make it necessary. It would only be in very rare cases that the government would find ground to interpose its authority, or be justified in exercising such a prerogative.

The government, therefore, was probably wrong in discharging itself of all direct concern with the judicature of India; for, without any fault on the part of the courts, the administration of the law may, and sometimes does, become an engine of the greatest oppression and practical injustice when separated from the rest of the body politic, which is necessarily of a despotic character. The union of the judicature with the rest of the political system, cannot in India, as in free countries, be maintained by means of public opinion, which has literally no existence amongst the natives of India—or, if it does exist, is not heard, and has no weight. Nor are there any free institutions to support the independent decisions of the bench. So that the only power which, by possibility, can sustain and enforce the right exercise of justice, is the government. If a member of council presided and officiated as chief judge of the Sudder Adawlut—if all suits filed, with the cause of action in each, were regularly reported to government, and if they had the power to stay any decree for a time, or altogether, and, when they saw fit, to order a new trial, the system of judicature would be guarded from being at variance, as it now too frequently is, with the general system of political administration, which, as it cannot be too often repeated, is essentially arbitrary in its nature, and must necessarily continue so. The government, in short, is the only authority which can at all

times exercise a salutary control over the judicature in India, or render its decisions conducive to the public welfare. The want of this power on the part of the rulers of that country has occasionally led to very great public evils and inconveniences, and in some instances even to rebellion.

It is highly gratifying to find men who have served long in India, and whose duties have led them to mix much with the natives, looking forward with satisfaction to the period when the inhabitants of the country may be able to relieve us from the anxiety of managing their own affairs. I will not risk marring the following manly testimony to the merits of the natives by an abridgement, but give the questions which were put to Mr. Hill by the select committee of the House of Commons, and his answers, as I find them in the minutes ordered to be printed, 16th August, 1832.

"*Question.* Since your system supposes the more extensive employment of natives in the administration of justice, do you suppose that the effect of such an extended employment of natives would be, by whatever gradations, ultimately to throw the government of India into their hands?

"*Answer.* My views on that point are, that the natives ought to be brought forward in the government of their own country, as far as they are capable of being so by their moral and intellectual qualifications, subject only to the security of the empire, so long as we retain it. My views would, therefore, bring them forward, certainly, in the administration of the country, but would not have the effect of placing political power in their hands.

"*Q.* Supposing them to improve in intelligence and knowledge, do you conceive that the effect would be to endanger the stability of the British power?

"*A.* If that effect resulted from a more liberal system towards the natives, I think it is a consummation most ardently to be desired. I do not think the measures I have suggested would be likely to place power in the hands of the natives before they were fit to use it. I have no conception that any English statesman who turns his attention to the subject would for an instant entertain the idea of keeping India in a debased and degraded state, in order to perpetuate or prolong our empire.

"*Q.* On the contrary, you would be prepared to suggest a system which might ultimately have the effect of completing the transition of power from our hands to those of our present subjects?

"*A.* That I should think a most desirable result, but I see no prospect of it."

There is much feeling and good sense in the following remarks on the same subject by Sir John Malcolm. "The people of India," he observes, "must, by a recurring sense of benefits, have amends made them for the degradation of continuing subject to foreign masters; and this can only be done by the combined efforts of every individual employed in a station of trust and responsibility to render popular a government which, though not national, has its foundations laid deep in the principles of toleration, justice, and wisdom. Our success and moderation, contrasted with the misrule and violence to which a great part of the population of India have for more than a century been exposed, have at this moment raised the reputation of the British nation so high, that men have forgotten their feelings of patriotism in the contemplation of the security and prosperity they enjoy under strangers; but these are feelings which that very knowledge that it is our duty to impart must gradually revive and bring into action."—*Malcolm's Central India*, vol. ii. p. 436*.

The above words are quoted from a most important document, and one which, I am told, has effected a great deal of practical good in India. It is entitled, "Notes of Instructions to Assistants and Officers acting under the orders of Major-General Sir John Malcolm, G.C.B."

As the concluding lines of this valuable paper contain much that is solemn and impressive, and at the same time useful to every person sincerely interested in the eventful fate of our mighty empire in the East, I venture to transcribe them as they stand.

"One of my chief objects has been to impress, in the most forcible terms, the great benefits which are to be expected from a kind and conciliatory manner, and a constant friendly intercourse with those under your direction and control. It is the feelings and knowledge which such habits on your part will inspire, that can alone give effect to the principles that have been prescribed for your observance. You are called upon to perform no easy task:—to possess power, but seldom to exercise it; to witness abuses which you think you could correct; to see the errors, if not crimes, of superstitious bigotry, and the miseries of misrule, and yet forbear, lest you injure interests far greater than any within the sphere of your limited duties, and thus impede and embarrass, by a rash change and innovation that may bring local benefit, the slow but certain march of general improvement.

"Nothing can keep you right on all these points but constant efforts to add to your knowledge, and accustoming your minds (as I have before urged you) to dwell upon the character of the British power in India, and that of the empire over which

* P.S. 1840.—I am glad to learn that this plan of employing the natives in the administration of justice in India has been found, in almost every instance, to succeed as well as its advocates had hoped for. This applies, however, as I understand, chiefly to their employment in the higher situations, which are of course filled only by the upper classes of natives; but even in the lower offices, it is found that the natives are gradually learning those habits of practical good faith and fair dealing which, as they have been the principal means of extending our influence over them, give a new and more generous direction to every impulse, the moment they are put in operation amongst themselves. In this way, more than in any other, may we hope to raise the standard of morals in the East, and thus to fit the natives for the reception of Christian doctrines by a foretaste of their excellent practical fruits.

I ought to add, that there is now no limitation to the extent of the actions which may be tried in civil suits before these native judges—I mean in original jurisdiction—but in every case, a right of appeal lies to the English authorities. It is very satisfactory and important to know, that the English reversals of these decisions made by the native judges are extremely rare. In criminal cases the authority of the native judges is limited to minor offences, but Englishmen are subject to their jurisdiction only in civil suits.

it is established. That empire, comprehending numerous tribes and nations, with all their various institutions and governments, may truly, though metaphorically, be viewed as a vast and ancient fabric, not without shape and beauty, but of which many parts are in a dilapidated state, and all more or less soiled or decayed;—still, it is a whole, and connected in all its parts—the foundations are deep-laid, and, to the very summit, arch rests on arch. We are now its possessors, and if we desire to preserve while we improve it, we must make ourselves completely masters of the frame of the structure to its minutest ornaments and defects; nor must we remove the smallest stone till another is ready to fill the vacant niche, otherwise we may inadvertently bring ruin on our own heads and those of others, on the spot where we too eagerly sought to erect a monument of glory."

CHAPTER IX.

THE ENGLISH IN INDIA.

THE British community in India is extremely limited in numbers, compared to the native population of the country in which they are placed, the total number being under 40,000. There are only between eleven and twelve hundred of the Company's civil servants actually employed; the English officers in our native army may be taken at about four thousand, all of whom hold commissions signed by His Majesty; while the officers of the King's troops in India amount to about a thousand, of whom one quarter may always be considered as absent on leave, or on account of sickness. The total number of Her Majesty's troops serving in India at this time (1840), is about 27,000 men. This includes 23 regiments of infantry and 4 of cavalry belonging to the regular army, the expenses of which are defrayed by the Company, but does not include the two European corps at each presidency exclusively in the service of the Company, whose numbers, when complete, may be taken at between 5,000 and 6,000 more.

Every Englishman in India has a specific, well-defined duty to perform; consequently, there are to be found no idlers—no mere dandies—no crowds of people either unfit for employment or who cannot obtain work; one and all are essentially busy. It must also be taken into account, as a very peculiar feature distinguishing India from England, that while in the mother-country an immense proportion of the whole society are engaged in their own affairs, and are free to choose their place of residence and their favourite occupation, the entire European population of India (with the exception of two or three thousand residents more, not in the Queen's or Company's service, are occupied in fulfilling the orders of acknowledged superiors. They can choose neither their own duty nor their own station, but must execute the tasks imposed upon them when and where their official employers think fit to direct.

As a farther peculiarity, it must be recollected, that most of the duties allotted to the East India Company's servants are of a different character from any which claim the attention of persons at home. Even the ministry and the other official servants of the public in England, offer but a very inadequate comparison to the civil service of India. The official men at home may all be changed in a moment, and the whole system of policy entrusted to different hands. It may even happen that very many of the new hands called to office in England are quite unpractised. But in India such sudden transfers of executive authority, from one set of men to another, are morally impossible; they may almost be described as physically impossible, in consequence of the wide distribution of the parties concerned, over an immense continent.

Even if it were not so, the parallel between the public servants in England and those in India would not hold good; since, while the persons who are in office at home form but a small proportion of the community, the official functionaries in India constitute very nearly the whole of the English society; so that the numbers being comparatively small, and all their duties well defined, the character of every one soon becomes known. This knowledge, again, is not confined to mere general character, as it is in England, but extends to the minutest details. A man in India may be truly said to act perpetually in the face of an audience qualified to judge of his proceedings, by personal acquaintance with the subject in all its bearings. If a servant of the Company—as will sometimes happen—is appointed to a situation beyond his capacity, his deficiency soon betrays itself, and he is straightway removed to a station more suited to his powers, whatever these may be. In like manner, when any man—no matter whether civil or military—is put into a situation lower than that which his talents, his industry, or his knowledge might enable him to fill with advantage, the want of keeping becomes obvious, and he is shifted up in the scale till his proper level be gained. The range of duties in India is so boundless, that there seldom arises any difficulty in fitting men with work suited to their abilities. The principle of employment seems to consist in placing on each one's shoulders as much weight of responsibility as they can sustain; care being taken neither to overload willing men with tasks they are incapable of executing, nor to waste the talents of others by applying them to business which persons of inferior capacity could perform equally well.

The governor-general, the governors of the presidencies of Madras and Bombay, the members of council, and commanders-in-chief, are nominated by the Court of Directors. With these exceptions, the patronage of the appointments in India, to every office whatsoever, is left entirely in the hands of the local governments. The Directors likewise send out such writers and cadets as are required for the public service in India. But here their patronage stops, as they do not interfere at all with their distribution in India.

It may be useful to consider, that as the Court of Directors is formed of experienced and practical men of all parties in the state, the field for the selection of these recruits for their service is very extensive and diversified. We find, accordingly, that the gentlemen sent to India are taken from all parts of the country, out of the upper and middle classes of society, without reference to politics, or to anything but their aptitude for public business. The admirable practical result proves in a remarkable degree the wisdom of this arrange-

ment, and appears to furnish one of the strongest arguments against any transfer of the elementary patronage, as it may be called, from the Court of Directors to other hands, especially to those of so fluctuating a body as the King's government. In support of this view, it affords me great satisfaction to avail myself of the following decided testimony to the public spirit and private worth of the Company's servants. It is the more valuable as coming from a distinguished and singularly well-informed historian, by no means friendly to some parts of the Indian system.

"To communicate the whole of the impression made upon a mind which has taken a survey of the government of India by the East India Company, more completely through the whole field of its action than was ever taken before, and which has not spared to bring forward into the same light the unfavourable and the favourable points, it may be necessary to state, that in regard to intention, I know no government, either in past or present times, that can be placed equally high with that of the East India Company—that I can hardly point out an occasion on which the schemes they have adopted, and even the particular measures they pursued, were not by themselves considered as conducive to the welfare of the people whom they governed—that I know no government which has on all occasions shown so much of a disposition to make sacrifices of its own interests to the interests of the people whom it governed, and which has, in fact, made so many and such important sacrifices—that, if the East India Company have been so little successful in ameliorating the practical operation of their government, it has been owing chiefly to the disadvantage of their situation, distant a voyage of several months from the scene of action, and to that imperfect knowledge which was common to them with almost all their countrymen. But that they have never erred so much, as, when distrusting their own knowledge, they have followed the directions of men whom they unhappily thought wiser than themselves, viz. practical statesmen and lawyers; and that, lastly, in the highly important point of the servants, or subordinate agents of government, there is nothing in the world to be compared with the East India Company, whose servants, as a body, have not only exhibited a portion of talent which forms a contrast with that of the ill-chosen instruments of other governments, but have, except in some remarkable instances, as that of the loan transactions with the nabob of Arcot, maintained a virtue, which, under the temptations of their situation, is worthy of the highest applause."—*Mill's History of British India*, vol. vi. p. 17, 3d edit. 1826.

The Directors never interfere in the slightest degree, directly or indirectly, with the local patronage, either at the presidencies or in the interior of the country, the whole of the nominations to office being left, without reservation, expressed or understood, to the governments on the spot. This gives a very distinctive and important character to the actual administration of India, the effective patronage of which being thus, in a great measure, cut off, both from the Court of Directors and from His Majesty's government, is placed in the hands of those persons who, in every conceivable view of the matter, must have the most knowledge of what is likely to be advantageous in such nominations. The local governments, it may be added, have at all times the most direct and obvious interest in making judicious appointments, in order that the work for which they alone are responsible may be well performed.

As new duties and new embarrassments arise in the conduct of affairs—and of these there is no lack—all the official men in India get shifted over and over again. If one chance fails to bring a clever fellow into notice, or does not afford an opportunity of detecting the secret of a pretender's incapacity, another occasion will ere long inevitably present itself. Every man's ability in India becomes, accordingly, sooner or later, pretty well known to his employers, and is duly appreciated, recorded, and held in readiness, to be applied to the solution of fresh difficulties when these arise. The utility of all this care will be evident, when we recollect that nothing can secure the allegiance and attachment of our native subjects but treating them in such a way that they shall feel a constantly-recurring sense of the benefit of our government. And, as that can be established only by a system of perfect sincerity, fair dealing, and rigorous good faith, it becomes of infinite consequence to place the management of affairs in the hands of men who will act rigidly up to the true spirit of these principles.

The consequences of this singular state of things extend further than, at first sight, might be imagined; for it is not the government alone who exercise the scrutiny alluded to—it is employed likewise by the individual members of the society over one another. Their total number, as I have shown, is small; but their duties are so conspicuous, and in the main so well understood, that every person is pretty well enabled to judge of his neighbour's conduct and capacity, if not by actual observation at the moment, at least by that nearly infallible test, the result. In point of fact, therefore, the private and public character of every official servant of the Company, civil or military, comes to be known, not only to his immediate circle, which may be either at the presidency or in the interior, but almost equally well over the whole of British India.

By an important and long-standing regulation of the Court of Directors, each of the local governments is obliged to transmit to England copies, not only of every public ordinance or regulation, but of every item of correspondence in all the different departments of their administration—civil, military, revenue, and judicial. As all official business in India, or very nearly all, is transacted in writing, and as regular minutes are invariably recorded of all consultations and other proceedings, ample means are furnished to the authorities at home of scrutinising at any moment the conduct of the governors they appoint. The regulation alluded to, although it tends to augment enormously the voluminous correspondence of the India House, makes the distant functionaries vastly more cautious than, in all probability, they would be if such frequent and complete means of investigating the whole of their proceedings did not exist. If, instead of sending copies of every letter, every ordinance, and every minute of each consultation, the government in India were allowed

to select for transmission to England such papers only as they might choose to consider useful to the public service, it would evidently be much more difficult for the authorities at home to fix the responsibility upon the proper shoulders.

There are no such things as taverns on the roads, or even regular hotels in the towns of India; so that European travellers of all ranks are necessarily thrown for their entertainment very much on the private resources of the resident civil and military officers of government. It is probably in consequence of this fact, that if any person be guilty of a breach of the laws of hospitality, his delinquency is circulated over India in a few weeks, to his certain loss of character, and, probably, to his eventual loss even of official station. Upon the whole, therefore, there is, perhaps, to be found no other example in the world of a society, high and low, being so completely under the influence of circumstances so extraordinary. The consequences of this state of things are so irresistible, that there is no escaping their operation, except by leaving the country altogether.

It is highly important, however, towards forming any just conception of the nature of the English society in India, to attend to the peculiar condition, moral and political, in which we originally found the native population. And this view is the more important, as it affords an additional clue to the grand mystery of our Eastern power. The true secret, no doubt, of the British strength in that quarter of the globe will be found in the moral union by which the present rulers of India are held together; but even that, potent though it be, would perhaps have gone for little, had the great mass of the native population been differently circumstanced.

Without entering into the intricate and tedious inquiry which has for its object the origin of the existing state of society in the peninsula of Hindustan, it will be sufficient to remember that, for many centuries previous to our occupation of India, its various nations (in number between thirty and forty) had been subjected either to foreign domination, or to internal tyranny; while in turn all of them had been repeatedly, and I may say periodically, exposed to violent, lawless, and desolating incursions of barbarians. These causes, together with others incidental to their situation relatively to the powerful nations lying on the north and on the west of Hindustan, had almost entirely deprived them of security, either in person or property, long before the Europeans appeared amongst them. They could scarcely be said to possess practically any system of laws—certainly they enjoyed no regulated system of judicature; but were at all times under the absolute will of the military chiefs, who neither felt, nor pretended to feel, any interest in the welfare of the mass of the people. As resistance to such authority, except in very extreme cases, was never dreamed of, the whole country became accustomed, during a long succession of ages, to the most abject submission to the reigning authorities.

The origin of the Hindoo religion, and that of the division of the whole population into castes, do not appear to be well known. But whatever may have been their causes, their effects are most extraordinary. They have entirely banished, or rather prevented, the growth of any trace of those feelings which we call nationality and public spirit. At all events, ever since we have known them, that proportion of the time and thoughts of the natives which is not occupied in the production of mere subsistence, is almost entirely absorbed by superstitious rites, or by the exclusive and fantastic duties of their respective castes. It may, indeed, be said, without exaggeration, that the ingenuity of man could hardly devise a worse system of religion and of manners, or conceive a state of political circumstances more adapted to keep down the human mind, than that which we found not only universally established, but deeply rooted in India.

The influence of the female part of the community over the rest of society, which is so eminently conspicuous in Europe, especially amongst the higher and middle classes, has no existence whatever in the East. The moral habits of the people (probably in consequence) are as gross and deteriorating to manners as their religious principles (so to call such wild superstitions) are degrading to their intellects. All improvements originating with themselves are, therefore, totally out of the question. Public opinion, considered as an enlarged national principle, is quite dead amongst them. They possess none of what we call influential men, or classes of men; and all those delightful and mutually beneficial relations which subsist between the different ranks of society in England, and in other countries of Europe, are absolutely unknown amongst the inhabitants of India. Without going into further details, it will therefore easily be understood how well the native society of India, when we first occupied the country, was prepared to be governed by a body of men possessed of cultivated talents, experience in public affairs, integrity of purpose, and unbounded confidence in one another, and who, in addition, held in their hands the warlike resources of a civilised empire.

To describe all the details of duty which a servant of the East India Company has to perform, would fatigue the attention and confuse the judgment of persons not already familiar with the technical language of Oriental business. But the principle upon which this duty turns, and the manner in which it is executed, being simple in themselves, may, I think, be rendered plain in a few words.

If a person have shown good talents in any particular station, at or so near the presidency as to fall under the favourable notice of the government; or if he have taken advantage of some one of the opportunities which are perpetually occurring to bring his talents, his local knowledge, his acquaintance with the native languages or customs, or any other attainments he may possess, to bear upon some practical question of government, the chances are, that as soon as a vacancy occurs in a higher department, he will be promoted. For his new post he sets out accordingly, and in a few days he finds himself in a situation of immense reponsibility, overwhelmed with duties, most of which are strange to him, surrounded exclusively by natives—several hundred miles, we will say, from the nearest appeal to higher authority. He is now called upon to administer, single-handed, the public affairs of a country perhaps half as large and populous as England. How is he to

accomplish such a mighty task? Not by physical force, for his whole strength probably consists of a small body-guard of sepoys. And even were it a dozen regiments, it would scarcely, of itself, avail anything. What is he then to do? There is but one course open to him—the way of truth, justice, and thorough disinterestedness. For whatever be his tastes, or his manners, or even his abilities, they will avail him not one jot in governing the natives, unless his own conduct be stamped, out and out, with the sterling impress of good faith. In the next place, he *must* treat the people not only with kindness, but with hearty confidence; and although he may not at all times be able to command in others the fullest measure of honesty which he could desire, he will seldom fail to secure the best services of the natives by implying that he expects such conduct from them, and showing that he duly appreciates their exertions. The character of the public servant who secures contentment in his province, at little or no cost of trouble to his superiors, but simply by the exercise of his own stock of mother-wit, his own unflinching honesty, and the just regulation of his temper, is more certain of rising proportionably in the scale of society in India, than perhaps in any other quarter of the world.

While things are in this condition, let it be supposed that some official difficulties arise in another part of the country—suppose a newly-acquired territory is to be settled, or an insurrection is to be suppressed—is it not likely that the man who has already shown himself equal to one great task will be preferred to the new and more important duty, while the place which he vacates—now put in easy train—may be trusted to a younger and less experienced hand? In this way, the scale is so admirably adjusted in India, that, let a man's powers be what they may, the government, ere long, are sure to find work for him, which shall keep him always so fully and so well employed, that his labours will never be light, or one tittle of his capacity wasted. It may, indeed, be said, that the servants of the East India Company, generally, are exerting themselves, as nearly as possible, at their utmost strength. Under this constant effort we know how many unfortunately break down; and yet a belief exists in England that their labours are light and their lives luxurious!

On the other hand, if a collector or judge, or magistrate, or commanding officer of any kind, stationed almost alone in the midst of an immense population, does not perform his duty truly, either from want of ability or from want of integrity, his power of conducting the business of his office speedily ceases. Those very natives, who, as long as they had confidence in his honesty and disinterestedness, had obeyed him implicitly, begin to reason about the propriety of his measures, and become suspicious of all he does or says. In a little while the distrust, which commenced by being partial, extends over the whole district, till, in the end, the political machine either stops, or is so materially interrupted in its course, that the effect cannot long be concealed from head-quarters. The revenue then fails to be duly collected—the laws are unjustly administered—the country falls into disorder, and at last the superior government is obliged to interfere.

The obvious remedy for this disordered state of things is the removal of a functionary who has proved himself incompetent. If his fault be a want of talents for the station he occupied, he is shifted to a lower office, better suited to his previously overrated powers. But if, unfortunately, he have proved himself not to be a good man and true, he is quietly recommended to get the liver complaint, and to recross the surf without loss of time;—after which he is no more heard of!

These principles enter so completely into every branch of the Indian administration, that there is no possibility of any escaping from their pervading influence. It is material, however, to recollect, that it is quite consistent with these statements that there should be a good many abundantly stupid fellows serving in India, just as there are very excellent heavy waisters and ordinary seamen in the best-manned ships of war. And it answers an exceedingly useful purpose to have good snug situations, suited to moderate or mean capacities, into which men may be silently dropped or promoted, who, but for this method of stowing them out of the way, might give a great deal of trouble, and sorely perplex the executive. At the same time, none of these places are sinecures, neither must their occupants be blockheads; but the routine of the useful and indispensable duties may be such as not to call for much intellect, though they may and do generally require a proper allowance of that sturdy kind of honesty which no bribes can touch, but which is not necessarily accompanied by talents. It must always be borne in mind also, that for anything ungentlemanlike or corrupt, there is in India no toleration whatever. Even the very lowest office of all requires good personal character and steady conduct, as conditions, for the absence of which no talents, no birth, no degree of personal favour in high quarters, can compensate.

I have spoken thus far of those persons only who serve in India under the direct orders and absolute control of the Company; but there reside in India, besides, a considerable body of English gentlemen who contribute materially to form the society at the three presidencies or seats of government, Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay, and a few, also, at some of the chief up-country stations. I allude to the merchants, agents, lawyers, medical men, and free mariners, besides indigo-planters and others. Of the several occupations of these persons it is needless to say more than that they are all, to use a military expression, more or less directly in communication with the Company's government. They are, without exception, upon sufferance in the country—that is to say, the Company possess by law the power of removing them from the country; and although this power is very rarely exercised, it exists in sufficient force to produce an important effect. The houses of agency are intimately connected with both the civil and military servants of the Company in all parts of the country; and as they are the grand managers of pecuniary affairs, the intercourse between them and their constituents becomes so intimate as to draw both parties into common habits and sentiments. Thus most of the feelings which I have ascribed to the actual servants of the East India Company, who form the great majority of the civil and military branches of society, are naturally participated in to a great

extent by those not strictly in the service. I allude chiefly to that high spirit of honour and generous hospitality, and that uniform or habitual course of fair dealing, which stamps everything said, or done, or even thought, in India, with the genuine spirit of truth. The members of the various houses of agency and other wealthy mercantile establishments are certainly not intrusted, like the Company's servants, with high commands on remote stations, where integrity, forbearance, and public spirit, are all in all, and without which no man, however gifted, can possibly get on for a day; yet their dealings with the natives are so extensive and complicated, that, were it only from interested pecuniary motives, they would find it to their advantage to maintain untarnished the character which already belongs to their nation in India.

The power of the Company is, indeed, so immense, and the ascendency it gives so beneficial to all parties concerned, and in every transaction of life, that the free traders, the merchants, agents, and planters, licensed by the Company to reside in India, would be the blindest persons possible to their own best interests, were they not to discover these obvious truths, and to avail themselves eagerly of an advantage of position which is given to them by circumstances in some degree foreign to their pursuits, but bearing indirectly upon them with unceasing force. In short, it has become the interest of all these gentlemen not only to profit by their situation as mere money-makers, in so productive a country, but likewise to adopt in perfect sincerity the ideas and the principles of the East India Company's servants. Thus the only class of persons from whom, at first sight, a less refined course of action might have been occasionally apprehended—from their objects being purely pecuniary, and from their not being under any direct authority—are, generally speaking, cordial supporters and contributors to the same grand stock of moral influence, so to speak, by which our extraordinary hold over the East is maintained.

If this view of the chief source of our Indian power be correct, it naturally gives rise to the important question, whether or not colonisation, as it has been called, or, more correctly, the free settlement of the English in India, which, it is whispered, is to form a clause in the new Charter, will interfere with the political system which at present works so admirably?*

On this subject there is so great a diversity of opinion amongst the best-informed authorities, that any very decided expressions respecting it may seem unreasonable; but I must be permitted to say, that after considering the subject attentively on the spot, and also in this country, and after reading all I can find written about it, the scheme of allowing English persons not belonging to the Company's service to take up their residence freely and permanently in India, appears, of all things, the most likely to unsettle the British authority in that quarter of the globe. As ours is a government of opinion almost exclusively, anything which interferes with the moral discipline regulating that opinion is calculated to sap the very foundations of our whole empire. At present, the authority of the East India Company extends effectively to almost all the English in India. I have already stated, that the system of control established over their servants is complete and searching in a degree to which there exists hardly any parallel, except, perhaps, in the naval service of his Majesty. This moral and political influence extends, also, in a great degree, to the small number of English who are now permitted to reside in that country upon their good behaviour, and who, generally speaking, from motives of interest, are content to fall into the ways of the Company, and virtually to become a portion of their servants.

But a sufficient number of troublesome exceptions have occurred, especially in the remoter parts of India, to give rise to great apprehensions, that, if the English are once permitted to enter the country freely, and to settle where they please, independent of the authority of the Company, it will be impossible to preserve for any length of time the complicated and highly artificial system by which that country is governed. The mischievous interference of persons who would resist, on principle and from habit, all such restraints as are now imposed on foreigners resident in the country, and who would despise the authorities who attempted to enforce them, seems capable of no safe limitation. Even as it is, the laws established in India, sustained and administered under the powerful sanction of the Company, backed by the government at home, are barely strong enough to protect the natives from the occasional exactions of the few Englishmen who are allowed to become temporary residents far in the interior, though they are liable to be sent away at a moment's warning. It is also much to be feared, that by no extension of the present judicial system could the laws be made effective over persons who should possess a right to remain in India in spite of the government. It cannot, indeed, be too often repeated, that the administration must of necessity be essentially despotic in a country won by the sword, though retained chiefly by opinion.

Perhaps, after all, it is not saying too much to assert, that, under the present restrictions, India answers fully the purpose of a colonial vent—not an indiscriminate one, certainly—for the mother-country. When we consider the vast numbers of accomplished young men belonging to the upper and middle classes of society in England who find, if not an ample, at least a respectable provision in the East, we shall probably have reason to think that as complete an opening is already provided for the spare exertions of our countrymen as can prove useful either to England or to India. I allude not merely to the civil or military services of the Company, which afford occupation exclusively for gentlemen, but to employments which are mechanical, such as those of carpenters, blacksmiths, and other artisans, not to mention the private soldiers in the King's and the Company's European regiments.

There is one other circumstance relating to the structure of the English society in India which

* P.S. 1840.—It will be seen by the note at page 60, that a clause to this effect was introduced into the new charter. The speculations which follow in the text I have left as they were written seven years ago, as there are no direct means of ascertaining, as yet, whether the effect of giving free permission to settlers in India is likely to prove detrimental or otherwise.

must not be omitted, as it very essentially modifies its structure. In England there are about as many ladies as gentlemen in most companies. It is quite different in the East. At the presidencies, no doubt, there are many ladies, and the society at those places has its tone given it, in some degree, by that circumstance. But even there, everything is so transient and fluctuating, that the benign influence of female companionship over the manners of the opposite sex is grievously limited. The nature of the climate renders it generally an unfit residence for children, so that one of two very painful alternatives must always be adopted—either the children are separated from their parents and sent to England, or the mother is separated from her husband to accompany her children home. It occasionally happens that the poor little things are kept too long, in the fond hope that the fatal law will prove less severe than usual in their particular case; and so they droop and die! I have known stout hearts broken in this way. The children, indeed, when sent home, may be left in England by their mother, who then rejoins her husband; but what a fearful dislocation of a household is this!

Domestic life, accordingly, in India, even at the presidencies, cannot, by possibility, be the same as at home, even supposing the parties concerned to be permanently stationed at those spots. A very small number of the whole service, however, are fixed in their situations. And what becomes of the rest? What can the residents at the native courts, the judges and magistrates in the interior, the collectors in the upper country, see of English female society?—Almost nothing. Still less can the military officers, who are continually on the march from distant region to distant region—from the banks of the Indus to the confines of China—from the breach of Travancore to the mountains of Thibet.

It is a curious sight, and one I have often watched with a mixture of amusement and pity, to witness the arrival at the presidency of a person who has been tanning himself for some ten or a dozen years far inland. The astonishment of a newly-arrived young lady from Europe can hardly be greater, at first beholding the gorgeous wonders of the East, than is the surprise of the sun-dried civilian or war-worn soldier, who gazes at the rosy cheeks of the European damsel—too soon, alas! to fade. No less bewitched does he find himself by manners and conversation to which he has been long a stranger; and he straightway sets down as an angel upon earth every European female whom he meets with, and feels surprised how he could possibly have remained blind to such charms in those bygone days, when he would no more have thought of marrying than of murdering a young lady. Without taking such an extreme case, it may well be conceived how it happens, that men so peculiarly circumstanced as the servants of the East India Company, must necessarily fall out of those habits of familiar intercourse with ladies which exercise such a salutary influence upon the character of men in Europe. The education and family of by far the greater part of the gentlemen forming the East India Company's service are excellent, and, consequently, their opportunities of seeing good society at home has been such, as to give them originally correct tastes, and a right direction to their thoughts on the subject of matrimony. But these thoughts and feelings become strangely modified in the East, in spite of the best resolutions; and the consequence is, that not a few hasty and ill-assorted unions are formed. Of course, many persons do marry well, and become all the better members of society, both in a public and a private point of view. Indeed, were it not for the heart-breaking separations formerly alluded to, marriages might well be as happy in India, and very often happier, than elsewhere; for the parties in that country are more dependent upon one another than in a crowded society.

Strange matches, however, are occasionally made up; and, what is not to be wondered at where the supply and demand bear no just proportion to one another, a great many rebuffs are given. So numerous, indeed, are refusals of this kind said to be, that a burlesque club has been spoken of, in ridicule of these rejected addresses. I remember, shortly after arriving in India, asking a person standing by me who a certain gentleman was I saw flirting about the ball-room?

"Oh, that," said he, "is the president of our Juwab club."

"What may Juwab mean?" I begged to know.

"Ask your neighbour," whispered he.

I did so, in all the innocence of my griffinage, and said, "Pray, sir, what does the word Juwab mean?—they tell me you know well."

The gentleman reddened with sudden anger; but seeing at once, from my manner, that I had been tricked, he recovered himself, laughed, and said—

"Oh! Juwab means an answer, or rather a refusal."

On my smiling at this, my informant continued, "I dare say all this is very good fun to you; and doubtless the newly-arrived ladies must think us strange fellows to be so precipitate. But," added he, with a sigh, "you little know, and the people of England little know, what we poor Indians suffer, and to what sad privations we are subjected. But the bitterest of all, by far, arises from the almost total absence of English female society."

This brings me to a very painful part of the subject, but one which cannot be altogether passed over. I allude to that portion of the Anglo-Indian community called the half-castes. I may scarcely, I believe, call these as yet a recognised portion of the English society; at least, they were not so considered in my day, some fifteen or twenty years ago, though I believe it is in some slight degree different now. But as these persons, or at all events their descendants, are probably destined to occupy an important station in the Eastern world in future times, it is right to say a word or two respecting them. The half-castes are either the illegitimate offspring of English fathers and Indian mothers, or they spring from intermarriages between children so born. It would require much space and time to describe the circumstances which lead to these unfortunate connections, nor could it answer any useful purpose to do so. The melancholy fact is all I have now to deal with, and it is impossible to disguise from ourselves, that the evil is one which must ever be found in like circumstances, however much good sense or

good taste—to say nothing of good principles—may condemn it. Be the moral of the story, however, what it may, the fact is, that children thus produced from stocks so essentially dissimilar, after a certain number of years of mismanagement by the mothers, fall under the exclusive protection, but too often absolute neglect, of their fathers. While some are sent to England to be instructed, others are reared at seminaries in India; but, in either case, they are generally well educated, and always brought up in the Christian faith, while they are taught to understand the advantages which belong to English manners and sentiments. In Bengal alone there are said to be now upwards of 20,000 half-castes; but what proportion of these may be the offspring of intermarriages amongst themselves, I know not.

I feel so fearful of offending the delicacy of individuals of this interesting class of persons, or of wounding the feelings of those to whom they are strongly attached, that I refrain from relating some characteristic and truly touching anecdotes respecting them. I shall merely observe, that I have scarcely ever made acquaintance with any half-castes of either sex, who did not give striking and favourable evidence of their double blood, or who did not unite much of the vigorous intellect and decision of purpose of the European, with a good deal of the winning and graceful gentleness of Asiatic manners. A consciousness of the marked separation incident to the slight shade in colour, by which nature distinguishes them from either of the two races from which they are sprung, when coupled with the melancholy history of their birth, has no doubt its subduing or humiliating effect. The half-castes do not enjoy the same, or nearly the same, advantages as the countrymen of their fathers; but they are in some respects better off than those of their mothers. They are decidedly superior to the natives as far as education goes, and in freedom from those gross superstitions and unworthy usages which chain down the minds of the Hindoos and even of the Mussulmen. They possess, however, as yet, no political advantages over the natives, while they are much worse off than the Europeans. The East India Company's power to dismiss obnoxious persons from their territories does not extend to people born in the country; but the half-castes complain, and it is said with reason, that owing to their anomalous character, they are deprived of many of the advantages of the courts of judicature established in British India; and that, while they are Christians in principle and in practice, they are exposed to trial under Mahometan laws*.

Already the wealth of many of these persons is very considerable, and their style of living often not unworthy of the country of their fathers. It appears, however, that, for reasons with which I am not fully acquainted, the British government in India have hitherto been extremely averse to place half-castes in situations of trust and emolument. They would seem to be systematically excluded from all offices, except those of a subordinate class; and in very few instances that I have heard of, are they employed in situations of high responsibility. They are almost entirely engaged as clerks in offices, though many, no doubt, have risen to wealth by trade—and one of the most distinguished master ship-builders in the East, when I visited India in 1817, was a half-caste. Still they labour under very great disadvantages; a fact which, I understand, excites the constant wonder of the natives, who see no good reason why the English should thus systematically, and, as they think, cruelly, keep back their own offspring. I learn, however, with satisfaction, that, in common with the Hindoos and other natives, the half-castes are now more freely admitted to situations of trust than they were when I visited India, three-and-twenty years ago; but the above remarks are still, I fear, substantially correct.

* P.S. 1840. This power of dismissing obnoxious individuals, except by regular process of law, is no longer held by the East India Company. The Mahomedan law is now, I understand, practically superseded, and the half-castes have no real grievance in that respect.

I have thus attempted to give a brief sketch—I trust a correct one, though certainly very incomplete—of the nature and predicament of our Indian empire. Without pretending to exhaust any single branch of the inquiry, I have merely touched upon a few points apparently the best calculated to give a general conception of a subject so extensive, that it cannot be fully understood without very long and very patient examination. My purpose has been rather to explain the rationale of our extraordinary power in the East—so very different from anything heretofore seen—than to describe at any great length the manner in which that power is exercised. It is perhaps impossible to discuss such details in a limited space; nor is it at all useful to attempt such a thing, for any one who feels curious to inquire further into these interesting matters, will find no difficulty in procuring information at large on all or any of the topics to which I have alluded. I would venture especially to recommend a perusal of the reports and evidence taken before both houses of Parliament in 1830, 1831, 1832. These, together with the Black Act (xi. of 1836), Reports on the Penal Code, and on Prison Discipline, &c., furnish, perhaps, the most complete view that it is possible to give of the whole East India question, in all its bearings. And as the evidence referred to contains the testimony of the best-qualified witnesses, and includes every shade of opinion on every controverted point, substantiated by documentary evidence of the most undoubted authenticity, there can be no source of information more exact and satisfactory, or so copious.

It was originally my intention to have given a short sketch of every part of the system of government in British India, but I soon discovered that this was too vast a task for the limited knowledge I happened to have picked up during my travels in that country; and I found the investigation and arrangement of fresh materials much too laborious and complicated for the time I could bestow upon them. I shall, however, be fully satisfied if I have so far excited any person's curiosity as to induce him to carry his inquiries further. And this I can safely promise him, that in proportion to the extent of his reading, so will be his gratification in pursuing these researches.

In this volume I have purposely omitted, for special reasons, several interesting topics, though I was by no means insensible to their great value; others I have been obliged to exclude, simply from want of room, and the dread of fatiguing the attention of my younger readers; and some subjects I have also passed by untouched, solely from a deficiency of information on my own part.

It was with considerable reluctance, for example, that I expressly avoided, in the earlier editions of this work, saying anything upon the Tea trade with China. But as I had some reason to believe that, before my pages could see the light, most of the material circumstances of that question would be changed, I thought it needless to dwell upon matters which would then have lost their interest; and equally needless to speculate on the operation of prospective measures, of which we could know nothing*.

That part of the question, however, which relates to the civil government of India, is very differently circumstanced from that which relates to our intercourse with China. The tea trade has been taken from the East India Company, and thrown open to the public at large, possibly without risking any convulsion that shall threaten the existence of our sovereign power in the East. But it seems extremely doubtful whether any material alteration can be made in the political government of India without hazarding our authority in that quarter; and, what is of vastly greater moment, without placing in imminent jeopardy the tranquillity, and even existence, of numerous nations whose security and prosperity we have taken into our safe-keeping, and bound ourselves to maintain by the most solemn engagements that have hitherto held nation and nation together.

To assert that the government of British India, under the direct management of the present Company, and subject to the control of his Majesty's ministers, is not perfect, is merely to repeat what may be said of any human institution. That a system practically more efficient as a whole will ever be devised, there appears to me not the slightest hope. Indeed, no extensive or abrupt change can be considered desirable by any one who, from having studied the subject fully and attentively, knows the facility with which well-considered improvements are already at all times applied to such parts of the system as require amelioration, by those under whom the administration of our Eastern affairs has been so long and so ably conducted.

If, finally, the disinterested testimony of a traveller who has seen, in his time, the working of nearly every form of government on earth—in every climate, and under a vast variety of circumstances—be at all entitled to attention, it is freely and most cordially offered in favour of the Honourable East India Company's administration over almost every other which it has been his fortune to witness in any part of the globe.

* P.S. 1840.—Similar reasons still deter me from entering on the great Chinese question, which now occupies so large a share of public attention. To do any justice to that subject, either on its own account, or in respect to its bearing on Indian topics—with which alone I have pretended to meddle in the foregoing chapters—would require a volume many times larger than this.

CHAPTER X.

EXCURSION TO CANDELAY LAKE IN CEYLON.

THE fervid activity of our excellent admiral, Sir Samuel Hood, in whose flag-ship I served as lieutenant, from 1812 to 1815, on the Indian station, furnished abundant materials for journal-writing, had we only known how to profit by them. There was ever observable a boyish hilarity about this great officer, which made it equally delightful to serve officially under him, and to enjoy his friendly companionship: in either case, we always felt certain of making the most of our opportunities.

Scarcely, therefore, had we returned from the alligator-hunt, near Trincomalee, which I have already described, when Sir Samuel applied himself to the collector of the district, who was chief civilian of the place, and begged to know what he would recommend us to see next.

"Do you care about antiquities?" said the collector.

"Of course," replied the admiral, "provided they be genuine and worth seeing. What have you got to show us in that way? I thought this part of the country had been a wild jungle from all time, and that the English were only now bringing it into cultivation."

"On the contrary," observed our intelligent friend, "there are manifest traces, not very far off, of a dense and wealthy population. At all events, the inhabitants appear to have understood some of the arts of life, for they formed a huge tank or pond for the purpose of irrigation; so large, indeed, that there still exists, in one corner of it, a sheet of water extensive enough to deserve the name of a lake."

"Let us go and see it," exclaimed the admiral. "Can we ride? Order the horses; who minds the heat of the sun?"—for, like almost all newcomers, Sir Samuel cared nothing for exposure, and laughed at the precautions of more experienced residents. It was this habitual indifference which, I believe, two years after the period I am now speaking of, cost him his life. When travelling in the interior of India, near Seringapatam, he reached a station at which a fresh set of palankeen-bearers were to have met him, but where, owing to some accident, they had not been posted. "It matters not," cried the energetic chief; "let us walk." And sure enough he set off, to perform on foot a stage which even on horseback it might have been dangerous to undertake; for the sun had risen nearly to the meridian, and there was hardly a breath of wind. Possibly no mischief might have ensued from this fatal march, had not the admiral been previously residing for some days in Tippoo Sultan's palace on the island of Seringapatam, the most unhealthy spot in Mysore; and it appears to be a curious circumstance connected with the malaria of that noxious district, that its effects frequently lie dormant till some time after the traveller has quitted the region in which he breathed it. Sir Samuel Hood did not escape; but he felt no inconvenience till after he descended the Ghauts and entered the Carnatic. At Madras, the jungle fever, of which the fatal seeds had been sown at Seringapatam, and quickened into growth by subsequent exposure, attacked our noble friend, and in a few days carried him off.

The collector of Trincomalee soon satisfied the admiral that an expedition to Candelay Lake, as the ancient tank of the natives was called, could not be undertaken quite so speedily. Boats and horses indeed were all ready, and tents could easily be procured; but it was likewise necessary to prepare provisions, to pack up clothes, and to send forward a set of native pioneers to clear the way through brushwood, otherwise impenetrable. The admiral was in such ecstacies at the prospect of an adventure which was to cost some trouble, that he allowed nobody rest till everything had been put in train. Early in the morning of the next day but one, we accordingly set out in several of the flag-ship's boats, accompanied by a mosquito fleet of native canoes to pilot and assist us. Lady Hood, whom no difficulties could daunt, accompanied Sir Samuel; the captain of his ship, and his flag-lieutenant, with the collector as pilot, and one or two others, made up the party; and our excursion, though nearly destitute of adventures vulgarly so called, proved one of the most interesting possible.

The early part of our course lay over the smooth and beautiful harbour of Trincomalee, after which we passed through a series of coves, forming what is called the lake of Tamblegam, a connecting bay or arm of the sea, though far out of sight of the main ocean. We soon lost ourselves amid innumerable little islands clad thickly in the richest mantles of tropical foliage down to the water's edge, and at many places even into the water; so that, as not a stone or the least bit of ground could be seen, these fairy islets appeared actually to float on the surface. This kind of scenery was not altogether new to many of our party, who had been in the West Indies and at Bermuda; but it belonged to that class which the eye of a traveller never becomes tired of. The scene which followed, however, proved new enough to us all. We had to row our boats through a dense aquatic forest of mangroves for nearly a mile, along a narrow lane cut through the wood expressly for us the day before by the natives. These fantastical trees, which grow actually in the water, often recall to the imagination those villages one sees in countries liable to frequent inundation, where each house is perched on the top of piles. We saw with astonishment clusters of oysters and other shell-fish clinging to the trunk and branches, as well as to the roots of these trees, which proves that the early voyagers were not such inventors of facts as folks suppose them, nor far wrong in reporting that they had seen fish growing, like fruit, on trees!

Shortly before entering this watery wilderness, we encountered a party of native pearl-divers; and the admiral, who was at all times most provokingly sceptical as to reported wonderful exploits, pulled out his watch, and insisted on timing the best diver amongst them, to see how long he could remain under water. In no case did the poor fellow make out a minute complete; upon which, the admiral held up his watch exultingly in his triumph, and laughing to scorn the assurances that at other parts of the island divers might be found who could remain five minutes at the bottom. "Show me them! show me them!" cried he, "and then, but not till then—begging your pardon—I shall believe it."

This challenge, I am sorry to say, was never answered. The method used by these divers is to place between their feet a basket loaded with one or two large lumps of coral, the weight of which carries them rapidly to the bottom. The oysters being then substituted for the stones, the diver disengages his feet, and shoots up to the surface again, either bringing the full basket with him, or leaving it to be drawn up by a line.

Nothing could be imagined more wild and Arabian-Night-like than the mangrove avenue through which we rowed, or rather paddled, for the strait was so narrow that there was no room for the oars when pushed out to their full length. The sailors, therefore, were often obliged to catch hold of the branches and roots of the trees, to draw the boats along. The foliage, as may be supposed, where perennial heat and moisture occur in abundance, spread overhead in such extraordinary luxuriance, that few of the sun's rays could penetrate the massy net-work of leaves and branches forming the roof of our fairy passage. Not a single bird could be seen, either seated or on the wing; nor was even a chirp distinguishable above the dreamy hum of millions of mosquitoes floating about in a calm so profound, that it seemed as if the surface of the water had never been disturbed since the Creation. The air, though cool, felt so heavy and choky, that by the time we had scrambled to the end of this strange tunnel or watery lane, we could scarcely breathe, and were rejoiced to enter the open air again,—although, when we came out, the sun "flamed in the forehead of the morning sky," and beat fiercely and hotly upon the parched ground, from which every blade of grass had been scorched away.

The village of Tamblegam, to which we soon came, is inhabited by a colony of Hindoo emigrants from the coast of Malabar. It is a neat little place, of which the huts, formed chiefly of branches of the tamarind-tree and leaves of the plantain, standing under prodigiously high cocoa-nuts, are so very diminutive, that the whole looks more like a child's toy-box village than the residence of grown people. The principal edifice, which we failed not to visit forthwith, is a pagoda built of stone, exactly ten feet square. Not fancying there could be any harm in taking such a liberty, we entered the pagoda unceremoniously, and one of our artists set to work sketching the bronze image which the natives worship as a deity. This strange figure is in pretty good keeping with the rest of the establishment, being not quite three inches in height. But the Hindoos were shocked at our impiety, and soon ousted the admiral and his party, who then turned towards a little tank or pool of water, beatifully spangled over with the leaves and flowers of the water-lily, or lotus, so celebrated in Persian poetry. In the midst of these, several elegant groups of Indian girls had assembled themselves, and appeared to be enjoying the coolness of the water in a style which we envied not a little.

The Eastern fashion of bathing differs much from ours. Instead of plunging in and swimming about, one person sits down, while others pour pitchers of water over the head. We took notice also of one particularly interesting party of young and most beautifully formed damsels, who waded in till the water reached nearly to their breasts. Each of these girls held in her hand a chatty, or water-

pot, shaped somewhat like an Etruscan vase, the top of which barely showed itself above the level of the pool. Upon a signal being given by one of the party, all the girls ducked out of sight, and at the same time raised their water-jars high in the air. In the next instant, just as their heads began to re-appear above the surface, the vessels were simultaneously inclined so that the water might pour out gradually, and in such measure that by the time the bathers again stood erect, the inverted jars might be quite empty. Nothing could be more graceful than the whole proceedings; and we sat in the shade of the pagoda looking at these water nymphs for half an hour in great admiration, and thinking what a fine subject such beautiful figures would have formed for sculpture.

In the mean time a slender pole, forty feet in height, had been erected by a set of native tumblers, who presently exhibited before us various feats of extraordinary agility and strength—some of these are almost too curious to be believed by those who are not aware of the flexibility and dexterity of the Hindoos. We were most surprised and amused by the exploits of a lady of forty, which is considered a very old age in that climate, who ran up the pole more like a monkey than a human being, and then sticking herself on the top horizontally like a weathercock, whirled herself round, to the great astonishment of the European beholders. What tickled us particularly on this occasion was the good lady accompanying her strange movements with a noise so exactly like that of our old and respected friend Punch, when drubbed by his faithful wife Judy, that we all burst out a-laughing. Our shout occasioned a momentary embarrassment to the tumbler, who little guessed, poor old soul, how far off the point of the joke lay. Every traveller, I am sure, must have remarked, that it is these chance touches of home interest which most strongly excite his feelings when wandering in distant countries, and where he least expects to have his national sympathies awakened.

As the sun had by this time fallen past that particular angle in the sky above which it is considered by the bearers inexpedient to travel, we nestled ourselves into our respective palankeens, and proceeded on the journey through what seemed to us a very respectable forest, growing on lands which had once been under the plough, but apparently very long ago. To our inexperienced eyes and European associations, it seemed as if a century at least must have elapsed from the time such a matting of wood first supplanted the labours of the husbandman; but our friend the collector soon explained to us, that if any spot of ground in that rich district were neglected for a very few years, natural trees, as tall as those we now admired so much, would soon shoot up spontaneously and occupy all the soil. We shook our heads at this with the confident scepticism of ignorance, and exchanged glances amongst ourselves at the expense of our official companion; but in the course of an hour we were compelled, by the evidence of our own senses, to alter our note of disbelief. On coming to the real untouched virgin forest of the climate, we beheld a most noble spectacle indeed, in the way of scenery, such as I at least had never seen before, and have but rarely met with since. I do not recollect the names of the principal trees, though they were mentioned to us over and over again; nor does it matter much, for these would not help the description. The grand Banyan, however, with which European eyes have become so correctly familiar through the pencil of Daniell (which is quite matchless in the representation of the scenery, people, and animals of India), rose on every side, and made us feel, even more decidedly than the cocoa-nut trees had done in the morning, that we were indeed in another world. I may remark, that the cocoa-nut, as far as I know, flourishes only near the shore. It seems, indeed, to delight in holding out its slender and feathery arms to embrace the sea-breeze as it passes. All my associations, at least, connected with the appearance of this graceful tree, are mingled up with the cheerful sound of the surf breaking along interminable lines of snow-white beaches, formed of coral sand and pebbles, torn by the waves from the ledges almost everywhere fringing the coasts of the ever-delicious islands of the East.

Shortly after we had left the Indian village, the night fell, and, while we were threading the gigantic forest by the light of torches, the only thing at all like an adventure promised to occur to us; but it ended in nothing. The party consisted of six palankeens, each attended by eight bearers, though only four at a time, or at most six, supported the poles: these trotted along by the side of the bearers, between two and three dozen coolies or porters carrying provisions and torches.

With a mixture of vague alarm and curiosity we now listened to the accounts of wild elephants in these woods, though in the morning we had heard the same stories with indifference and incredulity; while the old hands of the party, who had felt rather piqued at our distrust of their marvellous narrations, pointed out with malicious satisfaction the recent foot-marks of these undisputed and formidable lords of the manor.

Sir Samuel and Lady Hood, with some of their staff, had left their palankeens and walked forward on the path, which barely admitted two people abreast, in order to enjoy the exceeding beauty of the Indian jungle, lighted up with the blaze of our torches. Suddenly the headmost musalgee or torch-bearer paused, listened, and then retreated precipitately upon the hinder ranks. Nothing was said by them, and nothing could we hear in the woods to explain the cause of this panic, which, however, soon became general amongst the natives. The bearers set down the palankeens, and in an instant they, as well as all the coolies, took to their heels, while the torches flitted about in the forest in a style which, had there been no apprehension, might have been acknowledged as very picturesque. Sir Samuel not only stood fast himself, but ordered all of us to do so likewise—remarking, that until we knew what to fly from, we might only be making matters worse by moving. Presently the loud crashing of the underwood of the forest, and a heavy thumping on the ground, gave abundant evidence that a wild elephant was close to us.

Some of the natives told us afterwards, that they had seen the monster; but although we peered into the forest with all our eyes, none of us could honestly take upon us to say we actually saw him—though assuredly we heard his footsteps

as he broke his way through the jungle. Robinson Crusoe and his wolves in Tartary came to our recollection; and upon our asking the natives what effect fires really had on wild beasts, they all assured us that hardly any animal, however ferocious, would come up to a light, and that we were safe so long as we kept near a torch. This might be consolatory reasoning for the musalgees, each of whom carried a light, but it afforded little security to us, who, it was evident, would again be left in the dark should an elephant cross our path a second time. The admiral, therefore, and by his desire all of us, made an attempt to carry the torches ourselves. But we were soon so plaguily smoked and scorched for our pains, that we rested contented with the risk, and the bearers having gradually crept back to the palankeens, we once more moved on. In spite of all that had passed, some of the party remained so doggedly sceptical, from being habitually distrustful of all things wonderful, that they declared the whole affair a mere matter of panic, and dared to swear there could not be found an elephant within fifty miles of us. Scarcely had this opinion, so injurious to the honours and glories of our late adventure, been uttered, when the commander-in-chief, who, as usual, was leading the way, snatched a light from one of the men's hands, and waved it over what the geologists call a "recent deposit," half the size of a wheel-barrow, and outrivalling in its column of smoke the muggiest torch in the line.

"There!" exclaimed the admiral, better pleased than if he had found a pile of rupees, instead of so much recent Album Græcum. "Will that evidence satisfy you? How many hundred yards off do you think can the fellow be who left this trace of his proximity?"

It was past ten o'clock when we reached our tents, which had been pitched in the morning on the borders of the celebrated lake we came to visit. All the party were well fagged, and so ravenously hungry, that we shouted for joy on seeing supper enter just as we came to the ground. It is the greatest mistake possible to suppose that people, when they are very hungry, are indifferent or insensible to the merits of good cookery. It is true they will then eat, and even relish things which at other seasons they might not choose to touch; but I have invariably observed, that it is when the appetite is keenest that the perception of choice viands becomes the most acute—exactly as a really good bed is most enjoyed when we are most fatigued.

"This," said our excellent caterer the collector, "is the dish upon which we pride ourselves most at Trincomalee. It is the true Malay curry—rich, as you perceive, in flavour, and more than half of it gravy—which gravy, I beg you particularly to take notice, is full of minced vegetables, while the whole is softened with some of the youngest kind of cocoa-nut, plucked this very evening since the sun went down. The capital 'artiste,' as I suppose they would call him in Paris, who dressed this superb mess, served many years as master-cook to the Sultan of Djocjocatra, in the interior of Java. The rogue was captured with a stew-pan in his hand when the brave General Gillespie stormed the lines round the palace. That rice, which fills the dishes flanking the curry, comes from India—one kind from Patna, the other from Pillibeet."

These praises fell far short of the merits of this glorious supper; nor can I remember anything in the way of gourmandise in any part of the world comparable to this exquisite midnight feast.

While we are on the subject of curry, a word or two on the history of this most delicious of all the varieties of the family of stews may prove acceptable to true lovers of good eating. In the first place, I dare say it will surprise most people—old Indians inclusive—to learn that the dish we call curry—pronounced Kari by the natives—is not of Indian, nor, indeed, of Asiatic origin at all. It is not known to the Persians, Arabs, Chinese, Burmans, Siamese, or to any of the Indian Islanders. Neither is it known, even at this day, to the inhabitants of Hindustan itself, except to such as are in frequent communication with Europeans. Even the word curry, or kari, is not supposed to be of genuine Indian origin—in short, there is reason to believe that curries were first introduced into India by the Portuguese; and this view is in some degree supported by the consideration that chilies or capsicums, so invariably one of the most important ingredients, are known to be natives not of Asia, but of America.

I have so often watched the palankeen-bearers and other natives preparing their supper, which, after the fashion of the Romans, is their great meal, that I think, upon a pinch, I could make a tolerable curry myself. I would set about it thus:—I would first pound together twelve parts of coriander seed, two of black pepper, one of cayenne, three of cummin, and five of pale turmeric; then add a few cloves, a bit of cinnamon, half a nutmeg, and two or three onions. In India—I mean on the continent of Hindustan—the liquid or gravy which is added to these spiceries, before the fish or meat is put in, consists generally of ghee, which is boiled or clarified butter. This ghee, which is a considerable article of commerce in India, is preferred to butter in making curries, and that which is formed from the milk of the buffalo is considered superior to that made from cow's milk. In the northern provinces of India it is common to add a little milk or cream, and still more frequently a little curdled and acidulated milk, called dhye. The Malays generally make the gravy of their curries of the ground kernel of the fresh cocoa-nut, instead of using butter or ghee.

As to the kinds of rice which are eaten with curry, they are innumerable. They differ in almost every province of India, in each of which, also, there are upwards of a dozen varieties. What is curious enough, the inhabitants are so attached to the particular kinds of rice produced amongst themselves, that it is with extreme difficulty they can be made to eat any other kind. Thus, at the first establishment of our new settlement of Singapore—at the extreme or southern end of the Malay peninsula—the native troops or sepoys would not touch a grain of the beautiful rice of Java, Siam, and Cochin China, although the Europeans preferred it greatly to that of Bengal. Mr. Crawfurd, the governor of Singapore, from whom I have procured most of these details, had the greatest difficulty in prevailing on the Bengal convicts to eat the fine rice of China—just

as if the superintendant of the hulks in the Thames were to find coercive measures necessary to induce the Pats and Sanderses of their gangs to eat the wheaten bread of Kent, instead of the potatoes and oaten cakes of their native land!

The finest rice in Hindustan, in the opinion of many persons, is produced in the province of Behar, commonly called, from the capital, Patna rice. This is cultivated in about the latitude of 26° north. But the finest of all is grown considerably further north in the province of Rohilcund, and called, from its principal market, Pillibeet, a town lying between the 28th and 29th degrees of north latitude. And it is a singular fact that these, which are undoubtedly the two best kinds of rice, should be produced in countries and in latitudes where it is only an occasional object of culture. Rice is not the staple corn in any country lying beyond the tropic.

At the door and windows of our supper tent were hung up by the neck sundry well-bedewed goglets of spring water, cheek by jowl with a jolly string of long-necked bottles of Lafitte and Château Margaux, joyously fanning themselves in the thorough draught of the cool night-breeze, breathing so gently along, that we could just hear it whispering through the leaves of the damp forest, and sweeping towards the lake past the tents, the curtains of which it scarcely stirred.

The wine perhaps was almost more chilled than a fastidious wine-fancier might have directed; nevertheless, it flowed over our parched palates with an intensity of zest which I do not believe it is in mortals to be conscious of enjoying till they have toiled a whole day in the sun within half-a-dozen degrees of the equator. Bottle after bottle —each one more rich and racy than its valued and lamented predecessor—vanished so fast, that, ere an hour had elapsed, we felt as if a hundred wild elephants would have stood no chance with us!

As we straggled off to our respective beds, made up in the palankeens, according to the custom of the country, we became sensible of a serious annoyance, of which we had taken but little notice while baling in the hot curries and cool clarets within the tent. A most potent and offensive smell was brought to us by the land-wind; and the admiral, who was not a man to submit to any evil capable of remedy, insisted on an immediate investigation into the cause of this annoyance.

After hunting about in the wind's eye for a short time in the jungle, with torches in our hands, we came upon a huge dead buffalo, swollen almost to double his natural size. Upon seeing this, the bearers and servants shrugged their shoulders, as if the case had been hopeless. Not so the gallant admiral, who, in his usual style of prompt resource, called out, "Let us bury this monster before we go to bed." And, sure enough, under his directions, and by his assistance, (for, though he had but one hand, he plied it better than most other men's two) we contrived, in a quarter of an hour, to throw sand, earth, and leaves enough over the huge carcase to cover it completely. "There's a cairn for you!" exclaimed the admiral, throwing down his spade, "and now let us turn in; for by the first peep of the morning we must have a touch at the wild ducks and peacocks on the sides of the lake, and perhaps we may contrive to have a shot at a buffalo or a stray elephant."

Accordingly, next morning, actually before it was light, I felt the indefatigable admiral tugging at my ear, and bidding me get up, to accompany him on a shooting excursion, and as he said, "Mayhap we shall get sight of some of those elephants, the existence of which you presumed to doubt last night. Come, Mr. Officer, show a leg! I know you are a bit of a philosopher, and curious in natural history; so rouse up and come along with me."

Most cordially did I then anathematise all philosophy, and I wish I had never expressed any curiosity on the score of wild beasts, peacocks, or ancient tanks; but as the admiral was not a person to be trifled with, I made a most reluctant move, and exchanged the delightful dream of hot curries and cool sherbet for the raw reality of a shooting-match, up to the knees in water, at five in the morning. At one place, such was his excellency's anxiety to secure a good shot at some ducks, that he literally crawled for a couple of hundred yards along the muddy shore of the lake on his knees, and at the end expressing himself fully repaid by getting a single capital shot at a wild peacock! He was also gratified by bringing down a magnificent jungle-cock—a bird which resembles our barn-door fowl in form, but its plumage is vastly more brilliant, and its flight more lofty and sustained, than any of which the bird can boast in its tame state. Our scramble in the mud brought us within sight of a drove of several hundred buffaloes. We saw also several troops of wild deer; but, to our great disappointment, not a single elephant could we catch even a glimpse of. We counted, at one time, several dozens of peacocks—some perched on the trees, some high in the air; we fired at them repeatedly, but, conscientiously, I do not believe any came within shot. Their plumage exceeded that of our tame peacocks less in the brilliancy of the colour than in the wonderful fineness of the gloss—a characteristic of animals of all kinds in their native state. We scarcely saw one small bird during our whole excursion, or heard a single note but the hideous screams of the peacock and parrot—tones which dame Nature, in her even-handed style of doing things, has probably bestowed upon these dandies of the woods, to counterbalance the magnificence of their apparel.

Perhaps this absence of smaller birds may be accounted for at the time of our visit by the unusually long drought which had occurred, with the consequent failure in the paddy, or rice-crop. While discussing this point, the collector took occasion to point out to us the great importance of such artificial means of irrigating a country as the ancient lake of Candelay, by the side of which we were now encamped, must have furnished to agriculturists of those forgotten days, when its precious waters were not allowed to run to waste, but were husbanded and drawn off by careful means to fertilise the surrounding country.

This stupendous monument of the wealth and industry of some former race is placed on ground slightly elevated above the districts lying between it and the sea, which, in a direct line, may be distant about twelve or fourteen miles. We could

not ascertain exactly what was the precise elevation, but, from the remains of trenches, sluices, and other contrivances for drawing off and distributing the water, it appeared that the fall in the ground must have been sufficient to enable the husbandmen to irrigate the fields at pleasure; though, to our eyes, no inclination could be perceived. The lake itself is now greatly diminished in extent, from the dilapidations in its "bund," or retaining embankment, but still it stretches over many square miles of area. On three sides it is confined by the swelling nature of the ground, and it is only on the fourth that any extensive artificial means have been resorted to for confining the water. At this place, across a flat broad valley, there has been thrown a huge embankment, constructed chiefly of oblong stones, many of them as big as a sofa, extending in a zig-zag line for several miles. At some places it rises to the height of thirty or forty feet, and the courses of stone being laid above one another with considerable regularity, this great retaining wall assumes the appearance of a gigantic flight of steps, and being crowned at top by an irregular line of tall trees, it breaks the sky-line beyond the lake in a manner extremely picturesque. Here and there lateral gaps between the hills occur in the other sides, all of which are filled up with similar embankments.

Near one end of the principal wall we could distinctly trace the ruins of a considerable tower, beneath which the great tunnel or outlet used for tapping the lake most probably passed. It is said that some early European settlers, a century or two ago, impressed with an idea that treasure was hid in this building, had torn it down to get at the gold beneath. I remember believing this at the time, and abusing the Dutch accordingly, although nothing like evidence had been adduced to substantiate the charge.

I found afterwards, in travelling over India, and other countries which had changed hands repeatedly, that the poor predecessors of the existing rulers were very convenient persons upon whose shoulders to rest the extra blame of deeds which would not bear the light. It is possible enough that the early Dutch settlers may have demolished the tower in question; but they could hardly be so silly as to expect to find treasure in the foundation. The true treasure at that spot—and hence, probably, the report and misconception—consisted in the enriching property of the water, judiciously saved and applied to the grounds on a lower level. All this appears so obvious, that one is lost in conjecturing what motives could induce any people to take the trouble to destroy so noble a work.

Nothing appears to be known of the age in which the work in question was raised; and, indeed, the course of vegetation is there so rapid, that, without considerable care and many allowances, no safe inference can be drawn from external appearances. The exposed faces of the stones seemed greatly weathered; but on turning one of them round by means of poles, we could distinguish the marks of a sharp-pointed chisel—a sight which, while it really told nothing of dates, was enough to carry the imagination far back into the depths of time lying beyond tradition, and respecting which we know nothing except what these feeble, but distinct evidences, afford us of the hand of man having actually been there.

On beholding these ancient chisel-marks at Candelay in Ceylon, at Pæstum in Italy, or at Stonehenge in England, of whose origin and history all trace is lost, we experience a sensation akin to what we feel on examining the fossil remains of animals in the strata of the earth. There is no need of further evidence than that of our senses to satisfy us that the birds, beasts, and fishes, which we see imbedded in the rocks, must once have been alive and merry; but when, and where, and under what circumstances, are questions which baffle the boldest fancy. It may have been a million years ago, or ten hundred millions of years—that is to say, we know nothing precisely about the matter! Such, no doubt, is the case at present. We know well, that the date of these phenomena must lie beyond certain periods, as we know that the fixed stars lie beyond certain distances from the earth. But I am willing to believe, that both in geology and in astronomy, the investigating powers of man will eventually penetrate many secrets which are now hid even deeper than these; and that the time may possibly one day come, when the rise, progress, and relative dates and intervals between the remotest and the most recent geological phenomena shall be ascertained with as much precision as the velocity of light, or the complicated motions of the moon. The precise epochs of these occurrences may, indeed, like the actual distance of the fixed stars, very long continue to baffle human investigation; but even these will probably yield at last to the researches of laborious man, and become as simple, and as easy of practical application, as the law of gravitation, or the perplexing theory of the tides.

CHAPTER XI.

GRIFFINS IN INDIA—SINBAD'S VALLEY OF DIAMONDS —A MOSQUITO HUNT.

On the evening of the 18th of November, 1812, we sailed, in his majesty's ship Illustrious, from the magnificent harbour of Trincomalee. In attempting to get out we were sadly baffled by light shifting winds, which knocked us about from side to side of the entrance, in which, unfortunately, no good anchorage is to be found, owing to the great depth of water and the rocky nature of the ground. This serious evil of a rocky bottom is now almost entirely obviated by the admirable invention of iron cables, when the water is not too deep. The links of the chain merely acquire a polish by their friction against the coral reefs and other sharp ledges, by which the best hempen cables of past times would be cut through in ten minutes.

The chain-cable, however, is difficult of management in deep water, that is to say, when the soundings are more than twenty or twenty-five fathoms. Nothing is so easy as getting the anchor to the bottom in such cases; it is the "facilis descensus," with a vengeance! But when the anchor is to be pulled up again, then comes the tug. I once let go my anchor with a chain-cable bent to it in forty-five fathoms, without having

calculated on the probable effects of the momentum. Though the cable was bitted, all the stoppers snapped like packthread; and the anchor, not content with shooting to the bottom with an accelerated velocity, drew after it more than a hundred fathoms of chain, in such fearful style that we thought the poor ship must have been shaken to pieces. The noise was like that of rattling thunder, and so loud that it was impossible to hear a word; indeed it was even difficult to speak, from the excessive tremour caused by the rapid and violent passage of the links, as the chain leaped, or rather flew, up the hatchway, flashing round the bits, and giving out sparks like a fire-work. Finally, it tore its way out at the hause-hole, till the whole cable had probably piled itself on the anchor in a pyramid of iron at the bottom of the sea. The inner end of the cable had of course been securely shackled round the heel of the mainmast; but the jerk with which it was brought up, made the ship shake from end to end as if she had bumped on a rock, and every one fully expected to see the links fly in pieces about the deck, like chain-shot fired from a cannon. It cost not many seconds of time for the cable to run out, but it occupied several hours of hard labour to heave it in again. The ordinary power of the capstan, full manned, scarcely stirred it; and at the last, when to the weight of chain hanging from the bows there came to be added that of the anchor, it was necessary to apply purchase upon purchase, in order to drag the ponderous mass once more to the bows.

When we got fairly clear of the harbour of Trincomalee, and caught the monsoon, we dashed along-shore briskly enough; and having rounded the south point of Ceylon, well named or called Dondra Head, or thunder cape, we paid a visit to Point de Galle, celebrated for its bread-fruit and cocoa-nuts. We then passed on to Columbo, the capital, or seat of government of the island. Ceylon, I may take occasion to mention, is not considered by our countrymen of the East to be in India. We stared with all our eyes when this unexpected information was first given us, and fancied our merry friends were quizzing us. But we soon learned that, in the technical language of that country, Ceylon does not form a part of India; still less does Sumatra, Java, or any indeed, of the islands in the great tropical Archipelago; and far less still is China talked of as constituting a part of India. New-comers are, of course, a good deal perplexed by these and sundry other local peculiarities in language and manners, which they at first laugh at as a good joke, then ridicule as affected, and lastly conform to as quite natural and proper, because universally understood amongst those whom it most concerns.

The same thing takes place, I believe, in the technicalities of every profession as much contradistinguished from ordinary life as that of the British in India. I have seen a party of tourists from the inland counties of England prodigiously tickled at Portsmouth, on going afloat, to find a rope called a sheet, to see gigs moving about without wheels, and to hear the people on board ship talking of saddles, bridles, bits, and martingales! But to return to the East: I may mention that the term India is confined, amongst the English residents there, to the peninsula of Hindustan, and does not include Ceylon; probably from that island being immediately under the Queen's government, and not a part of the Company's possessions. The straits of Malacca, Sunda, and so on, together with the China sea, and those magnificent groups of islands, the Philippines and Moluccas, are all included in the sweeping term—"To the eastward."

At almost every part of this immense range I found further local distinctions, of greater or less peculiarity and extent according to circumstances. At one place I was puzzled by hearing the name of a whole country appropriated to a single spot. At Bombay, for example, I remember it was the custom, at a certain season of the year, to talk of going to the Deccan, which word properly includes an immense region consisting of many provinces; whereas those who used this expression meant, and were understood to express, only one point in it—a little watering-place. Mere local words, in like manner, come to have a much more expanded signification. The word Ghaut, I believe, means, in strictness, a pass between hills; and hence, some bold etymologists pretend, comes our word gate! The term, however, is now applied to the whole range of mountains which fringe the western coast of India, just as the more gigantic Cordilleras of the Andes guard the shores of the Pacific.

I remember well, that one of the most striking peculiarities to a stranger's ear on landing in India was the appropriation of all Europe when speaking exclusively of England, as if in England we were to speak of Asia when we meant only Calcutta or Madras. If you ask a man whether that is a "Europe" newspaper which he is reading, he may reply, "No; it is the Frankfort Journal." The word England or English is hardly ever used. Were any one inadvertently to talk of having on a pair of English shoes, in contradistinction, we shall suppose, to "country shoes," or those made in India, the mistake in language would at once betray his being a griffin. He ought to say "Europe shoes." The use of the word "employment," I remember also thinking quite strange for a time. In other countries it signifies occupation or actual work, but in India it means exclusively being in office under government. I have seen some very busy fellows overwhelmed with business from morning till night, but complaining all the while that they had "no employment."

But whether Ceylon be in India or not, all the world knows that this island is celebrated for precious stones; indeed, there are writers who believe that Mount Ophir of the Scripture is Adam's Peak of Ceylon. Be this also as it may, our ever-enterprising and active-minded admiral, Sir Samuel Hood, determined to bring this reputation to the proof; and, one day at dinner at the governor's table, actually announced his intention of having a hunt for the sapphires, rubies, tourmalines, chrysoberyls, corundums, and so on, for which the island has been long celebrated. His excellency, with the suavity of a courteous host, smiled, and wished the admiral success. Her excellency, the governor's lady, smiled too at this vain fancy of the admiral's, and exacted a promise of a ring set with the stones which the proposed expedition was to yield. Even the well-bred aides-de-camp and the knowing secretaries ex-

changed quizzical glances at the admiral's expense. The company at large scarcely knew, as yet, whether to treat so queer a proposal as a joke or as a serious affair. Sir Samuel, however, was not a man to be quizzed out of his purposes; and he therefore begged to have a party of workmen sent to him next morning to accompany him to a river not far off, along the banks of which, he had somewhere heard it reported, most of the finest stones in Ceylon had been found. He begged also that each of the men might be furnished with a basket, a request which naturally produced a second titter; for it was made in such a tone as led us to fancy the worthy admiral expected to collect the rubies and garnets in as great profusion as his far-famed predecessor, Sinbad the sailor, found them in the Valley of Diamonds.

His precise plan he kept to himself till he reached the river, the alluvial strip of ground bordering which was formed chiefly of fine gravel mixed with sand, leaves, and mud. He then desired the men to fill their baskets, and to carry the whole mass, just as they picked it up, to one of the ship's boats, which he had directed to meet him at the landing-place. This cargo of dirt and rubbish, on its reaching the ship, was put into a large sack, and carefully stowed away, as the admiral's poulterer reported, and the whole ship's company believed, for the benefit of the inhabitants of the hencoops—an idea not unnaturally conceived, for it is precisely with such gravel that fowls, as every one knows, are supplied at sea, as regularly as with food.

Not a word more was said on the subject at Government-house, nor on board the ship, till a couple of days after we had left Columbo, when the admiral ordered the bag of gravel into his cabin, along with a great tub of water and half-a-dozen wash-deck buckets. The whole stuff collected on shore was now thoroughly cleaned, and when only the gravel remained, it was divided into a number of small portions, and laid on plates and dishes on the table of the fore-cabin. As soon as all was arranged, the admiral, who superintended the operation, called out—

"Send for all the young gentlemen in the ship, and let every one take a plateful of gravel before him, to catch what jewels he can."

Before the party had time to assemble, the delighted admiral had himself discovered in his own dish three or four small garnets, one ruby, and several small crystals of corundum. By the aid of his young friends, to the astonishment of every one, a collection was soon made, which afterwards not only furnished the promised ring to the governor's lady, but made half-a-dozen others of equal beauty and perfect purity of materials. These precious stones were certainly not of the largest dimensions; but, for all that, the admiral, as he was wont in everything he attempted, completely established his point.

It was the fashion at Columbo to dine early, say at half-past three or four, in order to command the whole evening for riding or lounging about in the open air. The grand place of resort in those days was a sort of esplanade looking to the south, and called, if I recollect right, the "Galle Face," from being turned towards Point de Galle. The collection of people in the evenings at this spot afforded pleasing studies for every eye. All ranks and parties, from the governor to the lowest cooly, appeared to be assembled to see the sun go down upon the western waters, at an hour when, the sea-breeze having died away, the surface scarcely showed a ripple. Multitudes of the natives, too, not only of the island, but of many parts of India and of the eastern archipelago, drove about in their peculiar conveyances, hackeries and bandies, or chose to be carried in palankeens. Later in the night came the governor's parties and balls, where only the Europeans were assembled, and where, contrary to expectation, we generally found the coolest and most airy apartments. Indeed, it is only in cold countries that one meets with overheated ball-rooms. In India, every door and window being thrown open, a thorough draught sweeps through the house; or, if it be calm, an artificial breeze is produced by the waving of a dozen punkahs overhead, and everything is kept fresh and agreeable. Instead, therefore, of the ball-rooms in that country being choky and unwholesome, as they almost invariably are in cold climates, they are as airy as if they were erected on the open esplanade.

It is a curious fact, that this admirable contrivance of the punkah, which is merely a large fan suspended to the roof, and extending nearly the whole length of the rooms in India, is not only a purely English invention, but is very modern. It was first devised and introduced by the Bengal officers who served with Lord Cornwallis in the war of Mysore against Tippoo in 1791-92. The punkah afterwards became general under the Madras and Bombay presidencies, but not for some time; and it was only in 1811 they were introduced by the English into Java, on the conquest of that island. I believe the natives of India have not, as yet, anywhere adopted the fashion. But indeed the Hindoos are wretchedly behind the Europeans in every article of real luxury, for which all their noisy pomp and tinselly show is but a poor substitute.

This and many other devices which have been fallen upon by the ingenious, wealthy, and luxurious Europeans, to counteract the heat of the climate, are so successful, that, with a very few exceptions, I have hardly ever felt the temperature of India seriously oppressive. It is true, that some people delight in hot weather, and suffer so much from cold, that they consider it almost a point of honour and conscience not to complain, however high the thermometer rises. I cordially sympathise with these chilly folks, so that my testimony on this matter is not the best. I do own, indeed, that I have very often experienced a most disagreeable allowance of heat when exposed to the sun's rays on duty, either in a boat, or when keeping watch in a calm on the burning quarter-deck of a line-of-battle ship. In spite of the awnings spread fore and aft, the fierce sun of those climates will make his power felt. But as the evil effects of such exposure are very great, every discreet commanding officer will take the utmost pains to avoid employing his officers or people unnecessarily during the heat of the day, a period when the hardiest are the most apt to suffer, and the most experienced (paradoxical as it may appear) generally among the least fitted to stand the sun with impunity.

It is very strange, that during the first year,

and in some cases longer, most new-comers are hardly conscious of any ill effects arising from the influence of the sun's direct rays; and, accordingly, they walk and ride about, go to the marshes for snipe-shooting, bathe in the surf, and commit all sorts of folly, not only without inconvenience, but with much real enjoyment; while the older hands make themselves hoarse with preaching to these griffins that they are guilty of suicide. The ruddy-cheeked griffin, in his turn, laughs and quizzes the yellow-visaged Indian; and having trudged off to the swamps, passes the whole morning up to the knees in water so industriously, after a snipe, that he is brought home at three or four o'clock with a *coup de soleil!* Even if he escapes this sudden fate, he is pretty sure to feel, about a year and a day after his arrival, a severe twinge in his right shoulder, a pain in his side, and all the horrid symptoms of the fatal liver complaint.

"I tell you what it is, young fellows," said a venerable sun-dried officer to some of these gay Johnny Newcomes, "you shoot all day, you walk, and ride about in the sun; you poke along the streets without your palankeens; you play cricket on the esplanade at noon; you swill Hodgson's pale ale, claret, and sangaree, till you drive yourselves into the liver complaint, of which you die; and then, forsooth, we have the trouble of writing home to your friends that the climate did not agree with you!"

The fact is simply this: the climate of India will certainly not agree with those who are utterly careless about it, as too many are, and will give it no fair play; or who, from peculiar temperament, are predisposed to diseases incident to great heat; or, lastly, whose duties are of such a nature, that whether they will or not, they must be much exposed to the sun, without having the power of changing their place of residence frequently. The constant shifting about is, I believe, one of the chief causes of the superior healthiness of seamen in India over fixed residents on shore, though apparently of equal constitutional strength. This idea seems to be confirmed by the fact of most European troops employed in the wars of India being comparatively healthy, however much exposed to the sun, when in active service, and constantly moving from one encampment to another.

But whether on shore or afloat, it seems admitted to be of the greatest importance not to employ soldiers or sailors in the sun more than is absolutely necessary for the public service. It is a most painful thing, therefore, and exceedingly destructive to the health of a ship's crew, who have been for some time in that country, when she falls under the command of an inexperienced officer, just arrived from Europe, and who, from being himself at first almost entirely insensible to the disagreeable effect of the heat, considers the objections which other people make to exposure as mere fancies. Under this impression, he admits of no difference being made in the hours of work, but employs his people aloft, and in the boats, when sailing through the Straits of Sunda, or moored in Madras Roads, with as much unconcern as if he were navigating the British Channel, or lying snug at Spithead. The officers, and especially the surgeon, remonstrate in vain; poor Jack of course can say nothing; but in a few months, or it may be in a few weeks or days, half the ship's company find themselves in the doctor's list. Many die of dysentery, others sink under the liver complaint, and the slightest cuts often produce locked jaw; while many more, broken down by the climate, are invalided and sent home, having become useless to the service and to themselves for life! A judicious captain, under exactly similar circumstances, will not, perhaps, lose a man, nor need his crew be broken up and his ship rendered unserviceable.

From half-past nine or ten, till two or three o'clock, an officer of experience and consideration, if he can help it, will never allow a seaman's head to appear above the hammock-railing, but will discover some employment for the men on the main and lower decks. If the ship be at anchor, he will lay out a line, and warp the ship broadside to the sea breeze, that the cool air may sweep freely through all parts of the decks, and render everything fresh, sweet, and wholesome. No boats will be sent away from the ship during that fiery interval; or if any duty absolutely requires exposure, it will be got over with the utmost expedition. In the event of the men getting wet by a shower of rain, it is always right to make them shift their clothes instantly, and to muster them afterwards, to see that their things are dry and clean. These, and a hundred other little precautions, all of which are well known to old-stagers, ought to be industriously sought after by new-comers, and adopted implicitly and at once with scrupulous attention. At all events, the officer who has the means of enforcing these precautions, and yet does not choose to adopt them, has much to answer for if any of his crew die in consequence of needless exposure. He may rely upon it, that the fatal effects of a hot climate on the European constitution, unless very carefully watched, are inevitable. When I have seen regiments reduced to mere skeletons, and ships so weakened in their crews that they could scarcely weigh the anchor, I have often thought of Dr. Johnson's graphic description, in his paper on the Falkland Islands, of those unseen evils of war in uncongenial regions, of which so few people in high latitudes take any account: "By which," says he, "fleets are silently dispeopled, and armies sluggishly melted away!"

Persons living on shore, however, and who possess the means of purchasing the ordinary luxuries of an Oriental life, need scarcely ever suffer much inconvenience from the heat. The dress of Europeans, which consists of the lightest and whitest materials, reflects a great part of the heat. The rooms are always large and airy, without carpets, and stuck so full of open doors and windows, that when there comes the slightest breath of wind from the sea, it is sure to be felt; but all these are carefully closed up when the air is hot. The sun is excluded by various contrivances, chiefly by a shady verandah, ten or twelve feet wide, which generally runs quite round the house, so that no direct rays can strike into the apartments. And the painful glare of the lower sky, or, which is nearly as distressing to the eyes, the dazzling reflection from bright objects on the ground, is cut off by painted mats made of split ratan, imported from China. These devices, which scarcely intercept the wind, effectually prevent the admission of more light than is absolutely required. In some parts of India, a large open

framework is placed in a sloping position against the top of the verandah, and resting on the ground on the windward side of the house. This frame being covered over thickly, but loosely, with a layer of a peculiar kind of sweet-scented grass, called, I think, "cuscus," is kept well drenched with water. The process of evaporation caused by the hot and arid wind passing through the wet matting, produces a more considerable degree of cold than any one who has not enjoyed the surpassing luxury of these coolers, or tatties, can form any conception of. I have heard it said, indeed, that the damp cool air which streams through this wall of grass, though the most delightful thing in the world at the time, is apt to give colds, stiff necks, and the whole family of rheumatic twitches, to those who are in the habit of catching cold readily. But I will believe none of these stories against the exquisite tatties, under the lee of which I have seen people so often sitting, gasping for breath and praying for a breeze; for I need not remark, that during a calm they are useless.

Persons long accustomed to watch those periodical changes in the wind which occur in hot climates with such wonderful regularity every day, can often tell, by some intuitive consciousness, not capable of communication to inexperienced senses, almost the very moment when the long-looked-for sea-breeze is coming. I remember, at Madras, sitting one day in the inner room of a friend's house, who had been my school-fellow a dozen years before—now, alas! nearly twenty years in his grave. He was telling me of his quickness of perception in this matter, as we sat baking and stewing in what is called a garden-house on the far-famed Choultry Plain. My friend's quickness of sight beat that of the pig's (who, every one knows, can see the wind), for he declared he could see the calm, and, calling me to the verandah, pointed out this wonderful sight. The whole landscape appeared to have given way, like molten silver, under the heat, and to be moving past more like a troubled stream than the solid ground. The trees and shrubs, seen under a variety of refractions, through differently heated strata of air, seemed all in violent motion, though probably not one leaf of the highest cocoa-nut tree, nor a single blade of the lowest grass, stirred in reality. The buildings in the distance looked as if their foundations had been removed, while the shattered and broken walls danced to and fro, as if under the influence of some magical principles of attraction and repulsion; whilst many patches of imaginary water—the celebrated "mirage" of the desert—floating where no water could have existed, mocked our sight in this fantastic landscape.

Not a human being was then to be seen. The blue-skinned buffaloes, and the queer-looking Indian bullocks with humps on their shoulders, squeezed themselves under the skirts of the aloe and bamboo hedges. Others, pre-eminently happy, poor beasts! in order to escape the intolerable misery of the mosquitoes, immersed themselves in the muddy tanks or ponds, beneath the surface of which they contrived to hide every part of their bodies except the top of their nostrils, with just as much of their eyes as they could keep clear by the brush of their eyelids. Even our native bearers, who in general seem marvellously indifferent to the sun, had lifted the palankeens into the shade, and, with their wrappers over their heads, lay sleeping about the steps of the verandah in the coolest corners they could find. I tried first one chair, then another; then flung myself on a cane-bottomed sofa, seeking for rest, but all in vain. I next stretched myself flat on my back on the polished chunam floor, directly under the punkah, with my white jacket thrown open, neckcloth cast away, and collar unbuttoned. It was still to no purpose! The more moves I made, the worse became the oppression of the heat; and, for once in my life, I had very nearly confessed that it might possibly be rather too hot—when, just in time to save my credit for consistency, my friend clapped his hands and exclaimed, "Here comes the sea-breeze! I see it! I feel it! I hear it! Huzza for your life!" I, however, could see nothing, nor feel any thing; yet it was evident that all the experienced men of the party did. The bearers stationed to cast water on the tatties, had already commenced their operations, and a slight touch of the aromatic perfume of the delicious cuscus began to pervade the room. On walking towards the opening between two of the tatties, and looking towards the sea, I could distinctly perceive the intermediate scenery settling into its natural position, by the more uniform arrangement of the various strata of air forming the medium through which the objects were viewed.

I believe all the curious phenomena of the mirage are easily explained, upon the supposition that, under certain circumstances, the lower stratum of air may become actually lighter than those which are next above it. The effect of this will be obvious to those who have attended to the subject of atmospherical refraction, the usual effect of which, as every one knows, is to elevate objects, or make them seem higher than they really are. But the unusual effect, or that caused by the contact of hot ground rendering the lowest portion of the air specifically lighter than the superincumbent layers, is to make high objects seem to the eye lower than they really are. Thus, what we fancy to be water between two ridges of sand highly heated, is nothing more than a portion of the clear sky, the rays from which, in passing through the intermediate atmosphere, having entered the warm and rarified stratum in contact with the sand, are refracted to the eye in a manner which impresses on the sense of vision an image of the sky; and this so closely resembles the surface of still water, that the deception becomes at times quite complete. The tendency of the colder and heavier air above to mix with that which is hotter and lighter beneath it, is of course very considerable: the consequence is, that near the line of contact of the two media, there occurs an intermixture of air differing in density, and therefore in refractive power. Hence every object viewed through this troubled or heterogeneous part of the atmosphere must inevitably seem broken, distorted, and in motion.

Dr. Wollaston, who was, I conceive, the first to explain all these, and many other attendant phenomena, has also, with his usual ingenuity, suggested several popular experiments to prove the truth of his theory. (See the Philosophical Transactions for 1800.) One is, to place some

water, or clear syrup, in a square phial, and then add spirits of wine, or any other fluid of a different specific gravity, taking care not to allow them to intermix too suddenly, but to arrange matters so that the adjustment may take place gradually. Objects viewed through the phial, as the intermixture takes place, will undergo inversions and other variations in form and position similar to those of the mirage.

In the sleeping apartments of India, great care is taken to secure coolness. The beds, which are always large and hard, are generally placed as nearly as may be in the very middle of the apartment, in the line of the freest thorough draught which open doors and open windows can command. I speak now, of course, of the beds of men who live in single blessedness. In other cases, a simple contrivance has been devised, which, if it does render the sleeping-room a little less airy than that of the free and solitary bachelor, nevertheless accomplishes a good deal, and secures all the proprieties. The door, which is shut, has its upper half cut away, so that the air enters freely above; and the windows, also, being high, are always left open.

Round each bed is suspended a gauze curtain, without which sleep would be as effectually murdered as ever it was by any tragedy king. For, if even one villanous mosquito contrives to gain admission into your fortress, you may, for that night, bid good-bye, not only to sleep, but to temper, and almost to health. I defy the most resolute, the most serene, or the most robust person that ever lived between the tropics, to pass a whole night in bed, within the curtain of which a single invader has entered, and not to be found, when the morning comes, in a high fever, with every atom of his patience exhausted. Temper, under such circumstances, is really out of the question; the most placid creature on earth, even old Uncle Toby himself, would be driven into a rage!

The process of getting into bed in India is one requiring great dexterity, and not a little scientific engineering. As the curtains are carefully tucked in close under the mattress, all round, you must decide at what part of the bed you choose to make your entry. Having surveyed the ground, and clearly made up your mind on this point, you take in your right hand a kind of brush, or switch, generally made of a horse's tail; or, if you be tolerably expert, a towel may answer the purpose. With your left hand you then seize that part of the skirt of the curtain which is thrust under the bedding at the place you intend to enter, and, by the light of the cocoa-nut oil lamp (which burns on the floor of every bedroom in Hindustan), you first drive away the mosquitoes from your immediate neighbourhood, by whisking round your horse-tail; and, before proceeding further, you must be sure you have effectually driven the enemy back. If you fail in this matter, your repose is effectually dashed for that night; for these confounded animals—it is really difficult to keep from swearing, even at the recollection of the villains, though at the distance of ten thousand miles from them—these well-cursed animals, then, appear to know perfectly well what is going to happen, and assemble with the vigour and bravery of the flank companies appointed to head a storming-party, ready in one instant to rush into the breach, careless alike of horse-tails and towels. Let it be supposed, however, that you have successfully beaten back the enemy. You next promptly form an opening, not a hair's breadth larger than your own person, into which you leap, like harlequin through a hoop, or, to borrow Jack's phrase, "as if the devil kicked you on end!" Of course, with all the speed of intense fear, you close up the gap through which you have shot yourself into your sleeping quarters.

If all these arrangements have been well managed, you may amuse yourself for a while by scoffing at, and triumphing over the clouds of baffled mosquitoes outside, who dash themselves against the meshes of the net, in vain attempts to enter your sanctum. If, however, for your sins, any one of their number has succeeded in entering the place along with yourself, he is not such an ass as to betray his presence while you are flushed with victory, wide awake, and armed with the means of his destruction. Far from this, the scoundrel allows you to chuckle over your fancied great doings, and to lie down with all the complacency and fallacious security of your conquest, and under the entire assurance of enjoying a tranquil night's rest. Alas for such presumptuous hopes! Scarcely have you dropped gradually from these visions of the day to the yet more blessed visions of the night, and the last faint effort of your eyelids has been quite overcome by the gentle pressure of sleep, when, in deceitful slumber, you hear something like the sound of trumpets.

Straightway your imagination is kindled, and you fancy yourself in the midst of a fierce fight, and struggling, not against petty insects, but against armed men and thundering cannon! In the excitement of the mortal conflict of your dream, you awake, not displeased, mayhap, to find that you are safe and snug in bed. But in the next instant what is your dismay, when you are again saluted by the odious notes of a mosquito close at your ear! The perilous fight of the previous dream, in which your honour had become pledged, and your life at hazard, is all forgotten in the pressing reality of this waking calamity. You resolve to do or die, and not to sleep, or even attempt to sleep, till you have finally overcome the enemy. Just as you have made this manly resolve, and, in order to deceive the foe, have pretended to be fast asleep, the wary mosquito is again heard, circling over you at a distance, but gradually coming nearer and nearer in a spiral descent, and at each turn gaining upon you one inch, till, at length, he almost touches your ear, and, as you suppose, is just about to settle upon it. With a sudden jerk, and full of wrath, you bring up your hand, and give yourself such a box on the ear as would have staggered the best friend you have in the world, and might have crushed twenty thousand mosquitoes, had they been there congregated. Being convinced that you have now done for him, you mutter between your teeth one of those satisfactory little apologies for an oath which indicate gratified revenge, and down you lie again.

In less than ten seconds, however, the very same felon whom you fondly hoped you had executed, is again within hail of you, and you can almost fancy there is scorn in the tone of his abominable hum. You, of course, watch his motions still more intently than before, but only by

the ear, for you can never see him. We shall suppose that you fancy he is aiming at your left hand; indeed, as you are almost sure of it, you wait till he has ceased his song, and then you give yourself another smack, which, I need not say, proves quite as fruitless as the first. About this stage of the action you discover, to your horror, that you have been suddenly bit in one ear and in both heels, but when or how you cannot tell. These wounds, of course, put you into a fine rage, partly from the pain, and partly from the insidious manner in which they have been inflicted. Up you spring on your knees—not to pray, heaven knows!—but to fight. You seize your horse's tail with spiteful rage, and after whisking it round and round, and cracking it in every corner of the bed, you feel pretty certain you must at last have demolished your friend.

In this unequal warfare you pass the live-long night, alternately scratching and cuffing yourself—fretting and fuming to no purpose—feverish, angry, sleepy, provoked, and wounded in twenty different places!

At last, just as the long-expected day begins to dawn, you drop off, quite exhausted, into an unsatisfactory, heavy slumber, during which your triumphant enemy banquets upon your carcass at his convenient leisure. As the sun is rising, the barber enters the room to remove your beard before you step into the bath, and you awaken only to discover the bloated and satiated monster clinging to the top of your bed, an easy, but useless, and inglorious prey!

CHAPTER XII.

CEYLONESE CANOES—PERUVIAN BALSAS—THE FLOATING WINDLASS OF THE COROMANDEL FISHERMEN.

THE canoes of Ceylon, as far as I remember, are not described by any writer, nor have I met with any professional men who are aware of their peculiar construction, and of the advantages of the extremely elegant principle upon which they are contrived, though capable, I am persuaded, of being applied to various purposes of navigation.

Among the lesser circumstances which appear to form characteristic points of distinction between country and country, may be mentioned the head-dress of the men, and the form and rig of their boats. An endless variety of turbans, sheep-skin caps, and conical bonnets, distinguish the Asiatics from the "Toppee Wallas" or hat-wearers of Europe; and a still greater variety exists amongst the boats of different nations. My purpose, just now, however, is to speak of boats and canoes alone; and it is really most curious to observe, that their size, form, cut of sails, description of oar and rudder, length of mast, and so on, are not always entirely regulated by the peculiar climate of the locality, but made to depend on a caprice which it is difficult to account for. The boats of some countries are so extremely ticklish, or unstable, and altogether without bearings, that the smallest weight on one side more than on the other upsets them. This applies to the canoes of the North American Indian, which require considerable practice, even in the smoothest water, to keep them upright; and yet the Indians cross immense lakes in them, although the surface of those vast sheets of fresh water is often as rough as that of any salt sea. The waves, it is true, are not so long and high; but they are very awkward to deal with, from their abruptness, and the rapidity with which they get up when a breeze sets in.

On those parts of the coast of the United States where the seasons are alternately very fine and very rough, our ingenious friends, the Americans, have contrived a set of pilot-boats, which are the delight of every sailor. This description of vessel, as the name implies, must always be at sea, as it is impossible to tell when her services may be required by ships steering in for the harbour's mouth. Accordingly, the Baltimore clippers and the New York pilots defy the elements in a style which it requires a long apprenticeship to the difficulties and discomforts of a wintry navigation, in a stormy latitude, duly to appreciate. In the fine weather, smooth water, and light winds of summer, these pilot-boats skim over the surface with the ease and swiftness of a swallow, apparently just touching the water with their prettily-formed hulls, which seem too small to bear the immense load of snow-white canvas swelling above them, and shooting them along as if by magic, when every other vessel is lost in the calm, and when even taunt-masted ships can barely catch a breath of air to fill their sky-sails and royal studding-sails. They are truly "water-witches;" for, while they look so delicate and fragile that one feels at first as if the most moderate breeze must brush them from the face of the ocean, and scatter to the winds all their gay drapery, they can and do defy, as a matter of habit and choice, the most furious gales with which the rugged "sea-bord" of America is visited in February and March.

I have seen a pilot-boat off New York, in the morning, in a calm, with all her sails set, lying asleep on the water, which had subsided into such perfect stillness that we could count the seam of each cloth in the mirror beneath her, and it became difficult to tell which was the reflected image, which the true vessel. And yet, within a few hours, I have observed the same boat, with only her close-reefed foresail set—no one visible on her decks—and the sea running mountains high, threatening to swallow her up. Nevertheless, the beautiful craft rose as buoyantly on the back of the waves as any duck, and, moreover, glanced along their surface, and kept so good a wind, that, ere long, she shot a-head and weathered our ship. Before the day was done, she could scarcely be distinguished from the mast-head to windward, though we had been labouring in the interval under every sail we could possibly carry without risk of the masts!

The balsas of Peru, the catamarans and masullah boats of the Coromandel coast, and the flying proas of the South Sea Islands, have all been described before, and their respective merits dwelt upon, by Cook, Vancouver, Ulloa, and others. Each in its way, and on its proper spot, seems to possess qualities which it is difficult to communicate to vessels similarly constructed at a distance. The boats of each country, indeed, may be said to possess a peculiar language, understood only by the natives of the countries to which they belong; and truly, the manner in which the vessels of some regions behave under the guidance of their respec-

tive masters, seems almost to imply that the boats themselves are gifted with animal intelligence. At all events, their performance never fails to excite the highest professional admiration of those whom experience has rendered familiar with the difficulties to be overcome.

Long acquaintance with the local tides, winds, currents, and other circumstances of the pilotage, and the constant pressure of necessity, enable the inhabitants of each particular spot to acquire such masterly command over their machinery, that no new-comer, however well provided, or however skilful generally, can expect to cope with them. Hence it arises, that boats of a man-of-war are found almost invariably inferior, in some respects, to those of the port at which she touches. The effect of seeking to adapt our boats to any one particular place would be to render them less serviceable upon the whole. After remaining some time at a place, we might succeed in occasionally outsailing or outrowing the natives; but what sort of a figure would our boats cut at the next point to which the ship might be ordered—say a thousand miles farther from, or nearer to, the equator, where all the circumstances would inevitably be found totally different from what they were at the last port? We should have to change again and again, losing time at each place, and probably not gaining, after all, any of the real advantages which the natives long resident on the spot alone know the art of applying to practice.

It has been somewhere remarked, that when the human frame is compared with that of the inferior animals, it is found that, while in swiftness it is beaten by one, in scent by another, in strength by a third, yet does it contain by far the most admirable and varied combination of all those qualities severally possessed by the unintellectual animals. Thus man, upon the whole, is far better fitted than any of them for enduring the boundless varieties of climate which distinguish the different quarters of the globe, and for bringing into useful effort those inherent energies both of body and mind with which he is gifted, and which in the end render him the undisputed master of all other living things. So it is (to compare great things with small) in the case of the boats of ships of war, which are most ingeniously contrived to be useful in all climates, in all seas, on every coast, and at all times and seasons. It is true they seldom, if ever, match the boats of the ports at which they anchor, either in sailing or in rowing. But they are invariably found to accomplish these purposes well enough for real service, besides securing many other advantages which the local boats cannot command. They are likewise sufficiently well adapted to all seas and all weathers, and can either carry heavy loads or sail quite light. They are so strongly built that they can take the ground without injury, and yet are not so heavy as to be troublesome in handling. While they are strong enough to bear the firing of a cannon in their bow, they are capacious enough to carry water-casks or provisions, or to disembark troops, without being inconveniently cumbersome when stowed on the booms, or suspended from the quarters. Like the hardy sailors who man them, they are rough and ready for any service, in any part of the world, at any moment they may be required.

It is not likely that we shall ever essentially improve the build or equipment of our boats; but it must always be useful to seafaring men to become acquainted with such practical devices in seamanship as have been found to answer well; especially if they seem capable of being appropriated upon occasions which may possibly arise in the course of a service so infinitely varied as that of the navy. It is partly on this account, and partly as a matter of general curiosity, that I think some mention of the canoes of Ceylon, and the balsas of Peru, may interest many persons for whom ordinary technicalities possess no charm. At least there appears to be an originality and neatness about both these contrivances, and a correctness of principle, which we are surprised to find in connection with perfect simplicity, and an absence of that collateral knowledge which we are so apt to fancy belongs only to more advanced stages of civilisation and philosophical instruction.

The hull or body of the Ceylonese canoe is formed, like that of Robinson Crusoe's, out of the trunk of a single tree, wrought in its middle part into a perfectly smooth cylinder, but slightly flattened and turned up at both ends, which are made exactly alike. It is hollowed out in the usual way, but not cut so much open at top as we see in other canoes, for considerably more than half of the outside part of the cylinder or barrel is left entire, with only a narrow slit, eight or ten inches wide, above. If such a vessel were placed in the water, it would possess very little stability, even when not loaded with any weight on its upper edges. But there is built upon it a set of wooden upper works, in the shape of a long trough, extending from end to end; and the top-heaviness of this addition to the hull would instantly overturn the vessel, unless some device were applied to preserve its upright position. This purpose is accomplished by means of an out-rigger on one side, consisting of two curved poles, or slender but tough spars, laid across the canoe at right angles to its length, and extending to the distance of twelve, fifteen, or even twenty feet, where they join a small log of buoyant wood, about half as long as the canoe, and lying parallel to it, with both its ends turned up like the toe of a slipper, to prevent its dipping into the waves. The inner ends of these transverse poles are securely bound by thongs to the raised gunwales of the canoe. The out-rigger —which, it may be useful to bear in mind, is always kept to windward—acting by its weight at the end of so long a lever, prevents the vessel from turning over by the pressure of the sail; or, should the wind shift suddenly, so as to bring the sail a-back, the buoyancy of the floating log would prevent the canoe from upsetting on that side by retaining the out-rigger horizontal.

So far the ordinary purpose of an out-rigger is answered; but there are other ingenious things about these most graceful of all boats which seem worthy of the attention of professional men. The mast, which is very taunt, or lofty, supports a lug-sail of immense size, and is stepped exactly in midships, that is, at the same distance from both ends of the canoe. The yard, also, is slung precisely in the middle; and while the tack of the sail is made fast at one extremity of the hull, the opposite corner, or clew, to which the sheet is attached, hauls aft to the other end. Shrouds

extend from the mast-head to the gunwale of the canoe; besides which, slender backstays are carried to the extremity of the out-rigger; and these ropes, by reason of their great spread, give such powerful support to the mast, though loaded with a prodigious sail, that a very slender spar is sufficient. If I am not mistaken, some of these canoes are fitted with two slender masts, between which the sail is triced up, without a yard.

The method of working the sails of these canoes is as follows. They proceed in one direction as far as may be deemed convenient, and then, without going about, or turning completely round as we do, they merely change the stern of the canoe into the head, by shifting the tack of the sail over to leeward, and so converting it into the sheet—while the other clew, being shifted up to windward, becomes the tack. As soon as these changes have been made, away spins the little fairy bark on her new course, but always keeping the same side, or that on which the out-rigger is placed to windward. It will be easily understood that the pressure of the sail has a tendency to lift the weight at the extremity of the out-rigger above the surface of the water. In sailing along, therefore, the log just skims the tops of the waves, but scarcely ever buries itself in them, so that little or no interruption to the velocity of the canoe is caused by the out-rigger. When the breeze freshens so much as to lift the weight higher than the natives like, one, and sometimes two of them, walk out on the horizontal spars, so as to add their weight to that of the out-rigger. In order to enable them to accomplish this purpose in safety, a "man rope," about breast high, extends over each of the spars from the mast to the backstays.

Of all the ingenious native contrivances for turning small means to good account, one of the most curious, and, under certain circumstances, perhaps the most useful, is the Balsa, or raft of South America, or, as it is called on some parts of the coast, the catamaran. This singular vessel is not only very curious in the eyes of persons who have attended at all to such things as amateurs, but is calculated also to furnish some useful hints to professional seamen. The simplest form of the raft, or Balsa, is that of five, seven, or nine large beams of very light wood—say from fifty to sixty feet long—arranged side by side, with the longest spar placed in the centre. These logs are firmly held together by cross bars, lashings, and stout planking near the ends. They vary from fifteen to twenty, and even thirty feet in width. I have seen some at Guayaquil of an immense size, formed of logs as large as a frigate's fore-mast. These are intended for conveying goods to Paita, and other places along-shore. The Balsa generally carries only one large sail, which is hoisted to what we call a pair of shears, formed by two poles crossing at the top, where they are lashed together. It is obvious, that it would be difficult to step a mast securely to a raft in the manner it is done in a ship. It is truly astonishing to see how fast these singular vessels go through the water; but it is still more curious to observe how accurately they can be steered, and how effectively they may be handled in all respects like any ordinary vessel.

The method by which the Balsas are directed in their course is extremely ingenious, and is that to which I should wish to call the attention of sailors, not merely as a matter of curiosity (although on this score, too, it certainly has great interest), but chiefly from its practical utility in seamanship. No officer can tell how soon he may be called upon to place his crew on a raft, should his ship be wrecked; and yet, unless he has been previously made aware of some method of steering it, no purpose may be answered but that of protracting the misery of the people under his charge. We all recollect the horrid scenes which took place on the raft which left the French frigate Méduse, on the coast of Africa, in 1816; and yet it is perfectly obvious, from the state of the wind and weather, that if any one of that ill-fated party had been aware of the principle on which the South American Balsas are steered, they might easily have reached the land in a few hours, and all the lives, so horribly sacrificed, might have been saved.

Nothing can be conceived more simple, or more easy of application, than the South American contrivance. Near both ends of the centre spar there is cut a perpendicular slit, about a couple of inches wide by one or two feet in length. Into each of these holes a broad plank, called Guaras by the natives, is inserted in such a way that it may be thrust down to the depth of ten or twelve feet; or, at pleasure, it may be drawn up entirely. The slits are so cut, that, when the raft is in motion, the edges of these planks shall meet the water; or, in mathematical language, their planes are parallel with the length of the spars. It is clear, that if both the Guaras be thrust quite down, and there held fast in a perpendicular direction, they will offer a broad surface towards the side, and thus, by acting like the leeboards of a river-barge, or the keel of a ship, prevent the Balsa from drifting sidewise or dead to leeward. But while these Guaras serve the purpose of a keel, they also perform the important duty of a rudder, the rationale of which every sailor will understand, upon considering the effect which must follow upon pulling either up the Guara in the bow or that in the stern. Suppose, when the wind is on the beam, the foremost one drawn up; that end of the raft will instantly have a tendency to drift to leeward, from the absence of the lateral support it previously received from its Guara or keel at the bow; or, in sea language, the Balsa will immediately "fall off," and in time she will come right before the wind. On the other hand, if the foremost Guara be kept down while the sternmost one is drawn up, the Balsa's head, or bow, will gradually come up towards the wind, in consequence of that end retaining its hold of the water by reason of its Guara, while the stern end, being relieved from its lateral support, drifts to leeward. Thus, by judiciously raising or lowering one or both the Guaras, the raft may not only be steered with the greatest nicety, but may be tacked or wore, or otherwise directed, with a degree of precision which appears truly wonderful to those who see it for the first time; nor is this contrivance less a subject of admiration after the principles have been studied.

I never shall forget the sensation produced in a ship I commanded one evening on the coast of Peru, as we steered towards the roadstead of Payta, so celebrated in Anson's voyage, and be-

held an immense Balsa dashing out before the land-wind, and sending a snowy wreath of foam before her like that which curls up before the bow of a frigate in chase. As long as she was kept before the wind, we could understand this in some degree; but when she hauled up in order to round the point, and having made a stretch alongshore, proceeded to tack, we could scarcely believe our eyes. Had the celebrated Flying Dutchman sailed past us, our wonder could hardly have been excited more.

In Ulloa's interesting voyage to South America, a minute account is given of the Balsa, which I recommend to the attention of professional men. He winds up in these words:—

"Had this method of steering been sooner known in Europe, it might have alleviated the distress of many a shipwreck, by saving numbers of lives; as in 1730, the Genoesa, one of His Majesty's frigates, being lost on the Vibora, the ship's company made a raft; but, committing themselves to the waves without any means of directing their course, they only added some melancholy minutes to their existence."—*Ulloa*, book iv. chap. 9.

I once saw a model of a raft devised some years ago, expressly in imitation of the South American Balsa, by the late much-lamented Rear Admiral Sir Frederick Maitland, K.C.B., to be made out of the spare spars with which every ship of war is supplied. He proposed to form each of the Guaras, or steering-boards, of two of the ship's company's mess-tables joined together by gratings and planks. But he saw no reason why these should be limited in number, and thought that they might perhaps be usefully distributed along the entire length of the centre spar, so as effectually to prevent leeway or drift. In this manner, Sir Frederick was of opinion that a raft, capable of carrying a whole ship's crew, might be navigated for a considerable distance with ease and security. I was glad to find myself anticipated by an authority deservedly so high with the profession, in this practical illustration of an idea that had appeared to me extremely feasible, from the first moment I saw the Peruvian Balsas.

It will generally be found well worth an officer's attention to remark in what manner the natives of any coast, however rude they may be, contrive to perform difficult tasks. Such things may be very simple and easy for us to execute, when we have all the appliances and means of our full equipment at command; but, as circumstances may often occur to deprive us of many of those means, and thus, virtually, to reduce us to the condition of the natives, it becomes of consequence to ascertain how necessity, the venerable mother of invention, has taught people so situated to do the required work. For example, it is generally easy for a ship of war to pick up her anchor with her own boats; but it will sometimes happen that the launch and other large boats may be stove, and then it may prove of consequence to know how a heavy anchor can be weighed without a boat at all.

We happened, in His Majesty's ship *Minden*, to run upon the Coleroon shoal, off the mouth of the great river of that name, about a hundred miles south of Madras. After laying out a bower anchor, and hauling the ship off, we set about preparing the boats to weigh it in the usual way. But the master-attendant of Porto Novo, who had come off to our assistance with a fleet of canoes and rafts, suggested to Sir Samuel Hood, that it might be a good opportunity to try the skill of the natives, who were celebrated for their expertness in raising great weights from the bottom. The proposal was one which delighted the admiral, who enjoyed everything that was new. He posted himself accordingly in his barge near the spot, but he allowed the task to be turned over entirely to the black fellows, whom he ordered to be supplied with ropes, spars, and anything else they required from the ship. The officers and sailors, in imitation of their chief, clustered themselves in wondering groups in the rigging, in the chains, and in the boats, to witness the strange spectacle of a huge bower anchor, weighing nearly four tons, raised off the ground by a set of native fishermen, possessed of no canoe larger than the smallest gig on board.

The master-attendant stood interpreter, and passed backwards and forwards between the ship and the scene of operations—not to direct, but merely to signify what things the natives required for their purpose. They first begged us to have a couple of spare topmasts and topsail-yards, with a number of smaller spars, such as top-gallant masts and studding-sail booms. Out of these they formed, with wonderful speed, an exceedingly neat cylindrical raft, between two and three feet in diameter. They next bound the whole closely together by lashings, and filled up all its inequalities with capstan-bars, handspikes, and other small spars, so as to make it a compact, smooth, and uniform cylinder from end to end. Nothing could be more dextrous or seaman-like than the style in which these fellows swam about and passed the lashings; in fact, they appeared to be as much at home in the water as our sailors were in the boats or in the rigging.

A stout seven-inch hawser was now sent down by the buoy-rope, and the running clinch or noose formed on its end, placed over the flue of the anchor in the usual way. A couple of round turns were then taken with the hawser at the middle part of the cylindrical raft, after it had been drawn up as tight as possible from the anchor. A number of slew-ropes, I think about sixty or seventy in all, were next passed round the cylinder several times, in the opposite direction to the round turns taken with the hawser.

Upwards of a hundred of the natives now mounted the raft, and, after dividing themselves into pairs, and taking hold of the slew-ropes in their hands, pulled them up as tight as they could. By this effort they caused the cylinder to turn round till its further revolutions were stopped by the increasing tightness of the hawser, which was wound on the cylinder as fast as the slew-ropes were wound off it. When all the ropes had been drawn equally tight, and the whole party of men had been ranged along the top in an erect posture, with their faces all turned one way, a signal was given by one of the principal natives. At this moment the men, one and all, still grasping their respective slew-ropes firmly in their hands, and without bending a joint in their whole bodies, fell simultaneously on their backs, flat on the water! The effect of this sudden movement was to turn the cylinder a full

quadrant, or one quarter of a revolution. This, of course brought a considerable strain on the hawser fixed to the anchor. On a second signal being given, every alternate pair of men gradually crept up the spars by means of their slew-ropes, till one-half of the number stood once more along the top of the cylinder, while the other half of the party still lay flat on the water, and by their weight prevented the cylinder rolling back again.

When the next signal was given, those natives who had regained their original position on the top of the cylinder threw themselves down once more, while those who already lay prostrate gathered in the slack of their slew-ropes with the utmost eagerness as the cylinder revolved another quarter of a turn. It soon became evident, that the anchor had fairly begun to rise off the ground, for the buoy-rope, which at first had been bowsed taught over the stern of our launch, became quite slack. But Sir Samuel would not allow his people in the launch to assist the natives, as he felt anxious to see whether or not they could accomplish single-handed what they had undertaken. Accordingly, the slack of the buoy-rope merely was taken in by the launch's crew.

I forget how many successive efforts were made by the natives before the anchor was lifted; but, in the end, it certainly was raised completely off the ground by their exertions alone. The natives, however, complained of the difficulty being much greater than they had expected or had ever encountered before, in consequence of the great size of our anchor. In fact, when at length they had wound the hawser on the cylinder so far that it carried the full weight, the whole number of the natives lay stretched on the water in a horizontal position, apparently afraid to move, lest the weight, if not uniformly distributed amongst them, might prove too great, and the anchor drop again to the bottom, by the returning revolutions of the cylinder.

When this was explained to Sir Samuel Hood, he ordered the people in the launch to bowse away at the buoy-rope. This proved a most seasonable relief to the poor natives, who, however, declared, that if it were required, they would go on, and bring up the anchor fairly to the water's edge. As the good-natured admiral would not permit this, the huge anchor, cylinder, natives, launch, and all, were drawn into deep water where the ship lay. The master-attendant now explained to the natives, that they had nothing more to do than to continue lying flat and still on the water, till the people on board the ship, by heaving in the cable, should bring the anchor to the bows, and thus relieve them of their burden. The officer of the launch also was instructed not to slack the buoy-rope till the cable had got the full weight of the anchor, and the natives required no farther help.

Nothing could be more distinctly given than these orders, so that I cannot account for the panic which seized some of the natives when close to the ship. Whatever was the cause, its effect was such that many of them let go their slew-ropes, and thus cast a disproportionate share of burden on the others, whose strength, or rather weight, proving unequal to counterpoise the load, the cylinder began to turn back again. This soon brought the whole strain, or nearly the whole, on the stern of the launch, and had not the tackle been smartly let go, she must have been drawn under water and swamped. The terrified natives now lost all self-possession, as the mighty anchor shot rapidly to the bottom. The cylinder of course whirled round with prodigious velocity as the hawser unwound itself; and so suddenly had the catastrophe occurred, that many of the natives, not having presence of mind to let go their slew-ropes, held fast and were of course whisked round and round several times alternately under water beneath the cylinder and on the top of it, not unlike the spokes of a coach-wheel wanting the rim.

The admiral was in the greatest alarm, lest some of these poor fellows should get entangled with the ropes and be drowned, or be dashed against one another, and beaten to pieces against the cylinder. It was a great relief, therefore, to find that no one was in the least degree hurt, though some of the natives had been soused most soundly, or, as the Jacks said, who grinned at the whole affair, "keel-hauled in proper style."

In a certain sense, then, this experiment may be said to have failed; but enough was done to show the feasibility of the method, which, under the following modifications proposed by our great commander—who was one of the best sailors that ever swam the ocean—I have no doubt might be rendered exceedingly effective on many occasions.

"In the first place," said Sir Samuel, "you must observe, youngsters, that this device of the natives is neither more nor less than a floating windlass, where the buoyant power of the timber serves the purpose of a support to the axis. The men fixed by the slew-ropes to the cylinder, represent the handspikes or bars by which the windlass is turned round, and the hawser takes the place of the cable. But," continued he, "there appears to be no reason why the cylinder should be made equally large along its whole length; and were I to repeat this experiment, I would make the middle part, round which the hawser was to be passed, of a single topmast, while I would swell out the ends of my cylinder or raft to three or four feet in diameter. In this way a great increase of power would evidently be gained by those who worked the slew-ropes. In the next place," said the admiral, "it is clear that either the buoy-rope, or another hawser also fastened to the anchor, as a 'preventer,' ought to be carried round the middle part of the cylinder, but in the opposite direction to that of the weighing hawser. This second hawser should be hauled tight round at the end of each successive quarter turn gained by the men. If this were done, all tendency in the cylinder to turn one way more than the other would be prevented; for each of the hawsers would bear an equal share of the weight of the anchor, and being wound upon the raft in opposite directions, would of course counteract each other's tendency to slew it round. The whole party of men, instead of only one-half of them, might then mount the spars; and thus their united strength could be exerted at each effort, and in perfect security, against the formidable danger of the cylinder whirling back by the anchor gaining the mastery over them, and dropping again to the bottom. But without using

their clumsy, though certainly very ingenious, machinery of turning men into handspikes, I think," said he, "we might construct our floating windlass in such a way that a set of small spars —studding-sail booms, for instance—might be inserted at right angles to its length, like the bars of a capstan, and these, if swifted together, could be worked from the boats, without the necessity of any one going into the water."

While speaking of the dexterity of the natives of India, I may mention a feat which interested us very much. A strong party of hands from the ship were sent one day to remove an anchor, weighing seventy-five hundred-weight, from one part of Bombay dock-yard to another, but, from the want of some place to attach their tackle to, they could not readily transport it along the wharf. Various devices were tried in vain by the sailors, whose strength, if it could have been brought to bear, would have proved much more than enough for the task. In process of time, no doubt, they would have fallen upon some method of accomplishing their purpose; but while they were discussing various projects, one of the superintendants said, he thought his party of native coolies or labourers could lift the anchor and carry it to any part of the yard. This proposal was received by our Johnnies with a loud laugh; for the numbers of the natives did not much exceed their own, and the least powerful of the seamen could readily, at least in his own estimation, have demolished half-a-dozen of the strongest of these slender Hindoos.

To work they went, however, while Jack looked on with great attention. Their first operation was to lay a jib-boom horizontally, and nearly along the shank of the anchor. This being securely lashed to the shank, and also to the stock, the whole length of the spar was crossed at right angles by capstan bars, to the ends of which as many handspikes as there was room for were lashed also at right angles. In this way, every cooly of the party could obtain a good hold, and exert his strength to the greatest purpose. I forget how many natives were applied to this service; but in the course of a very few minutes, their preparations being completed, the ponderous anchor was lifted a few inches from the ground, to the wonder and admiration of the British seamen, who cheered the black fellows, and patted them on the back as they trotted along the wharf with their load, which appeared to oppress them no more than if it had been the jolly-boat's grapnel!

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SURF AT MADRAS.

From Ceylon we proceeded after a time to Madras roads, where we soon became well acquainted with all the outs and ins of the celebrated surf of that place. This surf, after all, is not really higher than many which one meets with in other countries; but certainly it is the highest and most troublesome which exists as a permanent obstruction in front of a great commercial city. The restless ingenuity and perseverance of man, however, have gone far to surmount this difficulty; and now the passage to and from the beach at Madras offers hardly any serious interruption to the intercourse. Still, it is by no means an agreeable operation to pass through the surf under any circumstances; and occasionally, during the north-east monsoon, it is attended with some degree of danger. For the first two or three times, I remember thinking it very good sport to cross the surf, and sympathised but little with the anxious expressions of some older hands who accompanied me. The boat, the boatmen, their curious oars, the strange noises they made, and the attendant catamarans to pick up the passengers if the boat upsets, being all new to my eyes, and particularly odd in themselves, so strongly engaged my attention, that I had no leisure to think of the danger till the boat was cast violently on the beach. The very first time I landed, the whole party were pitched out heels over head on the shore. I thought it a mighty odd way of landing; but supposing it to be all regular and proper, I scrambled up the wet sand, and merely muttered, with the sailor whom the raree showman blew into the air with gunpowder, —"What the devil will the fellows do next?"

The nature of this risk, and the methods adopted by the natives to prevent accidents, are easily described. The surf at Madras consists of two distinct lines of breakers on the beach, running parallel to each other and to the shore. These foaming ridges are caused by a succession of waves curling over and breaking upon bars or banks, formed probably by the reflux action of the sea carrying the sand outwards. The surf itself, unquestionably, owes its origin to the long sand of the ocean-swell coming across the Bay of Bengal, a sweep of nearly five hundred miles, from the coasts of Arracan, the Malay peninsula, and the island of Sumatra—itself a continent. This huge swell is scarcely perceptible far off in the fathomless Indian sea; but when the mighty oscillation—for it is nothing more—reaches the shelving shores of Coromandel, its vibrations are checked by the bottom. The mass of waters, which up to this point had merely sunk and risen, that is, vibrated without any real progressive motion, is then driven forwards to the land, where, from the increasing shallowness, it finds less and less room for its "wild waves' play," and finally rises above the general level of the sea in threatening ridges. I know few things more alarming to nautical nerves than the sudden and mysterious "lift of the swell," which hurries a ship upwards when she has chanced to get too near the shore, and when, in consequence of the deadness of the calm, she can make no way to seaward, but is gradually hove nearer and nearer to the roaring surge.

At last, when the great ocean wave approaches the beach, and the depth of water is much diminished, the velocity of so vast a mass sweeping along the bottom, though greatly accelerated, becomes inadequate to fulfil the conditions of the oscillation, and it has no resource but to curl into a high and toppling wave. So that this moving ridge of waters, after careering forwards with a front high in proportion to the impulse behind, and for a length of time regulated by the degree of abruptness in the rise of the shore, at last dashes its monstrous head with a noise extremely like thunder along the endless coast.

Often, indeed, when on shore at Madras, have

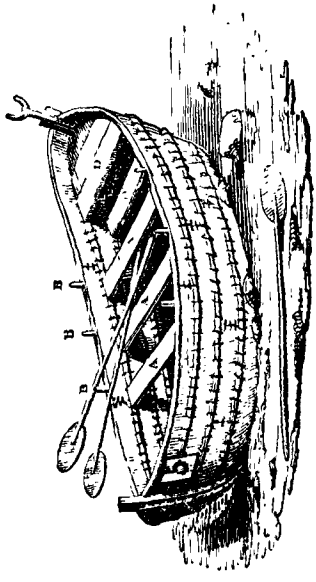
I lain in bed awake, with open windows, for hours together, listening, at the distance of many a league, to the sound of these waves, and almost fancying I could still feel the tremour of the ground, always distinctly perceptible near the beach. When the distance is great, and the actual moment at which the sea breaks ceases to be distinguishable, and when a long range of coast is within hearing, the unceasing roar of the surf in a serene night, heard over the level plains of the Carnatic shore, is wonderfully interesting.

Long afterwards, when within about five miles in a direct line from the Falls of Niagara, I remember thinking the continuous sound of the cataract not unlike that produced by the surf at Madras. What rendered the similarity greater, was the occasional variation in the depth of the note caused by the fitful nature of the intervening flaws of wind, just as the occasional coincidence in the dash of a number of waves, or their discordance as to the time of their occurrence, or finally, some variation in the strength of the land-breeze, broke the continuity of sound from the shore.

But it must fairly be owned, that there is nothing either picturesque or beautiful—though there may be a touch of the sublime—in the surf, when viewed from a boat tossing about in the middle of its deafening clamour, and when the spectator is threatened every instant to be sent sprawling and helpless amongst the expectant sharks which accompany the masullah boats with as much regularity, though for a very different purpose, as the catamarans. These primitive little life-preservers, which are a sort of satellites attending upon the great masullah or passage-boat, consist of two or three small logs of light wood fastened together, and capable of supporting several persons. In general, however, there is but one man upon each, though on many there are two. Although the professed purpose of these rafts is to pick up the passengers of such boats as may be unfortunate enough to get upset in the surf, new-comers from Europe are by no means comforted in their alarm on passing through the foam, to be assured that, in the possible event of their boat being capsised, the catamaran men may probably succeed in picking them up before the sharks can find time to nip off their legs! I grievously suspect that it is the cue both of the boatmen and of these wreckers to augment the fears of all Johnny Raws; and possibly the sly rogues occasionally produce slight accidents, in order to enhance the value of their services, and thereby to strengthen their claim to the two or three fanams which they are enchanted to receive from you as a toll.

Any attempt to pass the surf in an ordinary boat is seldom thought of. I remember hearing of a naval officer who crossed in his jolly-boat once in safety, but on a second trial he was swamped, and both he and his crew well-nigh drowned. The masullah boats of the country resemble nothing to be seen elsewhere.

They are distinguished by flat bottoms, perpendicular sides, and abruptly pointed ends, being twelve or fourteen feet long by five or six broad, and four or five feet high. Not a single nail enters into their construction, all the planks being held together by cords or lacings, which are applied in the following manner:—Along the planks, at a short distance from the edge, are bored a set of holes, through which the lacing or cord is to pass. A layer of cotton is then interposed between the planks, and along the seam is laid a flat narrow strip of a fibry and tough kind of wood. The cord is next rove through the holes and passed over the strip, so that when it is pulled tight the planks are not only drawn into as close contact as the interposed cotton will allow of, but the long strip is pressed against the seam so effectually as to exclude the water. The wood of which these boats are constructed is so elastic and tough, that when they take the ground, either by accident or in regular course of service, the part which touches yields to the pressure without breaking, and bulges inwards almost as readily as if it were made of shoe-leather. Under similar circumstances, an ordinary boat, fitted with a keel, timbers, and planks nailed together, not being pliable, would be shivered to pieces.



At the after or sternmost end, a sort of high poop-deck, D, passes from side to side, on which the steersman takes his post. He holds in his hand an oar or paddle, which consists of a pole ten or twelve feet long, carrying at its extremity a circular disc of wood about a foot or a foot and a half in diameter. The oars used by the six hands who pull the masullah boat are similar to that held by the steersman, who is always a person of long experience and known skill, as well as courage and coolness—qualities indispensable to the safety of the passage when the surf is high. The rowers sit upon high thwarts A A A, and their oars are held by grummets, or rings made of rope, to pins B B B, inserted in the gunwale, so that they can be let go and resumed at pleasure, without risk of being lost. The passengers, wretched victims! seat themselves on a cross bench C, about a foot lower than the seats of the rowers, and close in front of the raised poop or steersman's deck D, which is nearly on a level with the gunwale.

The whole process of landing, from the moment

of leaving the ship till you feel yourself safe on the crown of the beach, is as disagreeable as can be; and I can only say for myself, that every time I crossed the surf it rose in my respect. At the eighth or tenth transit I began really to feel uncomfortable; at the twentieth I felt considerable apprehension of being well ducked; and at about the thirtieth time of crossing, I almost fancied there was but little chance of escaping a watery grave, with sharks for sextons, and the wild surf for a dirge! The truth is, that at each successive time of passing this formidable barrier of surf, we become better and better acquainted with the dangers and possibilities of accident—somewhat on the principle, I suppose, that a veteran soldier is said to be by no means so indifferent as a raw recruit is to the whizzing of shot about his ears.

However this may be, as all persons intending to go ashore at Madras must pass through the surf, they step with what courage they can muster into their boat alongside the ship, anchored in the roads a couple of miles off, in consequence of the water being too shallow for large vessels. The boat then shoves off, and rows to the "back of the surf," where it is usual to let go a grapnel, or to lie on the oars till the masullah boat comes out. The back of the surf is that part of the roadstead lying immediately beyond the place where the first indication is given of the tendency in the swell to rise into a wave; and no boat not expressly fitted for the purpose ever goes nearer to the shore, but lies off till the "bar-boat" makes her way through the surf, and lays herself alongside the ship's boat. A scrambling kind of boarding operation now takes place, to the last degree inconvenient to ladies and other shore-going persons not accustomed to climbing. As the gunwale of the masullah boat rises three or four feet above the water, the step is a long and troublesome one to make, even by those who are not encumbered with petticoats—those sad impediments to locomotion—devised by the men, as I heard a Chinaman remark, expressly to check the rambling propensities of the softer sex, always too prone, he alleged, to yield to wandering impulses!

Be this, also, as it is ordained, I know to my cost, in the shape of many a broken shin, that even gentlemen bred afloat may contrive to slip in removing from one boat to the other, especially if the breeze be fresh, and there be what mariners call a "bubble of a sea"—a term redolent in most imaginations with squeamishness and instability of stomach and footing. In a little while, however, all the party are tumbled, or hoisted into the masullah boat, where they seat themselves on the cross bench, marvellously like so many culprits on a hurdle on their way to execution! Ahead of them roars and boils a furious ridge of terrific breakers, while close at their ears behind, stamps and bawls, or rather yells, the steersman, who takes this method of communicating his wishes to his fellow-boatmen, not in the calm language of an officer intrusted with the lives of so many harmless and helpless individuals, but in the most extravagant variety of screams that ever startled the timorous ear of ignorance. In truth, no length of experience can ever reconcile any man, woman, or child, to these most alarming noises, which, if they do not really augment the danger, certainly aggravate the alarm, and add grievously to their feeling of insecurity on the part of the devoted passengers.

I need scarcely say, that the steersman is the absolute master for the time being, as every skipper ought to be, whether he wear a coat and epaulettes, or be limited in his vestments, as these poor masullah boatmen are, to the very minimum allowance of inexpressibles. This not-absolutely-naked steersman, then, as I have before mentioned, stands on his poop, or quarter-deck, just behind the miserable passengers, whose heads reach not quite so high as his knees. His oar rests in a crutch on the top of the stern-post, and not only serves as a rudder, but gives him the power to slew or twist the boat round with considerable rapidity, when aided by the efforts of the rowers. It is necessary for the steersman to wait for a favourable moment to enter the surf, otherwise the chances are that the boat will be upset, in the manner I shall describe presently. People are frequently kept waiting in this way for ten or twenty minutes, at the back of the surf, before a proper opportunity presents itself.

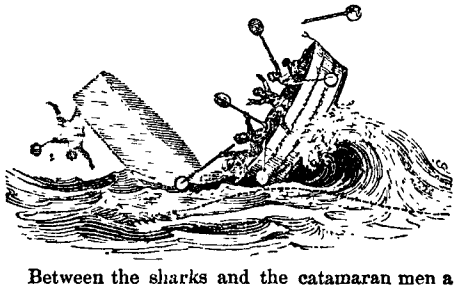
During all this while, the experienced eye of the veteran skipper abaft glances backwards and forwards from the swell rolling in from the open sea, to the surf which is breaking close to him. From time to time he utters a half word to his crew, with that kind of faint interrogative tone in which a commanding-officer indulges when he is sure of acquiescence on the part of those under him, and is careless whether they answer or not. In general, however, he remains quite silent during this first stage of the passage, as do also the rowers, who either rest the paddles horizontally, or allow their circular blades to float on the surface of the water. Meanwhile the boat rolls from side to side, or is heaved smartly upwards as the swell, just on the eve of breaking, lifts her into the air, and then drops her again into the hollow with the most sea-sickening velocity. I should state, that during this wofully unpleasant interval, the masullah boat is placed sideways to the line of surf, parallel to the shore, and, of course, exactly in the trough of the sea.

I have often watched with the closest attention to discover what were the technical indications by which these experienced boatmen inferred that the true moment was arrived when it was safe to enter the surf, but I could never make out enough to be of much professional utility. It was clear, indeed, that the proper instant for making the grand push occurred when one of the highest waves was about to break—for the greater the dash, the greater the lull after it. But how these fellows managed to discover, beforehand, that the wave, upon the back of which they chose to ride in, was of that exact description, I could never discover. On the approach of a swell which he knows will answer his purpose, the steersman, suddenly changing his quiet and almost contemplative air for a look of intense anxiety, grasps his oar with double firmness, and exerting his utmost strength of muscle, forces the boat's stern round, so that her head may point to the shore. At the same time he urges his crew to exert themselves, partly by violent stampings with his feet, partly by loud and vehement exhortations, and partly by a succession of horrid yells, in which the sounds Yarry! Yarry!! Yarry!!! predominate—indicating to the ears of a stranger the very

reverse of self-confidence, and filling the soul of a nervous passenger with infinite alarm.

These fearful noises are loudly re-echoed, in notes of the most ominous import, by all the other men, who strain themselves so vigorously at the oars, that the boat, flying forwards, almost keeps way with the wave, on the back of which it is the object of the steersman to keep her. As she is swept impetuously towards the bar, a person seated in the boat can distinctly feel the sea under him gradually rising into a sheer wave, and lifting the boat up—and up—and up, in a manner exceedingly startling. At length the ridge, near the summit of which the boat is placed, begins to curl, and its edge just breaks into a line of white fringe along the upper edge of the perpendicular face presented to the shore, towards which it is advancing with vast rapidity. The grand object of the boatmen now appears to consist in maintaining their position, not on the very crown of the wave, but a little further to seaward, down the slope, so as to ride upon its shoulders, as it were. The importance of this precaution becomes apparent, when the curling surge, no longer able to maintain its elevation, is dashed furiously forwards, and dispersed into an immense sheet of foam, broken by innumerable eddies and whirlpools, into a confused sea of irregular waves rushing tumultuously together, and casting the spray high into the air by impinging one against the other. This furious turmoil often whirls the masullah boat round and round, in spite of the despairing outcries of the steersman, and the redoubled exertions of his screaming crew, half of whom back their oars, while the other half tug away in vain endeavours to keep her head in the right direction.

I have endeavoured to describe the correct and safe method of riding over the surf on the outer bar upon the back of a wave, a feat in all conscience sufficiently ticklish ; but wo betide the poor masullah boat which shall be a little too far in advance of her proper place, so that, when the wave curls over and breaks, she may be pitched head foremost over the brink of the watery precipice, and strike her nose on the sandbank. Even then, if there happen, by good luck, to be depth of water over the bar sufficient to float her, she may still escape ; but, should the sand be left bare, or nearly so, as happens sometimes, the boat is almost sure to strike, if, instead of keeping on the back or shoulder of the wave, she incautiously precedes it. In that unhappy case, she is instantly tumbled forwards, heels over head, while the crew and passengers are sent sprawling amongst the foam.



Between the sharks and the catamaran men a race then takes place—the one to save, the other to destroy—the very Brahmas and Shivas of the surf ! It is right, however, to mention, that these accidents are so very rare, that during all the time I was in India I never witnessed one.

There is still a second surf to pass, which breaks on the inner bar, about forty or fifty yards nearer to the shore. I forget, however, exactly the method by which this is encountered. All I recollect is, that the boatmen try to cross it, and to approach so near the beach, that, when the next wave breaks, they shall be so far a-head of it that it may not dash into the boat and swamp her, and yet not so far out as to prevent their profiting by its impulse to drive them up the steep face of sand forming the long-wished-for shore. The rapidity with which the masullah boat is at last cast on the beach is sometimes quite fearful, and the moment she thumps on the ground, as the wave recedes, most startling. I have frequently seen persons pitched completely off their seats, and more than once I have myself been fairly turned over, and with all the party, like a parcel of fish cast out of a basket ! In general, no such untoward events take place, and the boat at length rests on the sand, with her stern to the sea. But as yet she is by no means far enough up the beach to enable the passengers to get out with comfort or safety. Before the next wave breaks, the bow and sides of the boat have been seized by numbers of the natives on the shore, who greatly assist the impulse when the wave comes, both by keeping her in a straight course, and likewise by preventing her upsetting. These last stages of the process are sometimes very disagreeable, for every time the surf reaches the boat, it raises her up and lets her fall again, plump on the ground, with a violent jerk. When at last she is high enough to remain beyond the wash of the surf, you either jump out, or more frequently descend by means of a ladder, as you would get off the top of a stage-coach ; and, turning about, you look with astonishment at what you have gone through, and thank Heaven you are safe !

The return passage from the shore to a ship, in a masullah boat, is more tedious, but less dangerous, than the process of landing. This difference will easily be understood, when it is recollected that in one case the boat is carried impetuously forward by the waves, and that all power of retarding her progress on the part of the boatmen ceases after a particular moment. In going from the shore, however, the boat is kept continually under management, and the talents and experience of the steersman regulate the affair throughout. He watches, just inside the surf, till a smooth moment occurs, generally after a high sea has broken, and then he endeavours, by great exertions, to avail himself of the moment of comparative tranquillity which follows, to force his way across the bar before another sea comes. If he detects, as he is supposed to have it always in his power to do, that another sea is on the rise, which will, in all probability, curl up and break over him before he can row over its crest and slide down its back, his duty is, to order his men to back their oars with their utmost speed and strength. This retrograde movement withdraws her from the blow, or, at all events, allows the wave to strike her with diminished violence at the safest point, and in water of sufficient depth to prevent the boat taking the ground injuriously, to the risk of her being turned

topsy-turvy. I have, in fact, often been in these masullah boats when they have struck violently on the bar, and have seen their flat and elastic bottoms bulge inwards in the most alarming manner, but I never saw any of the planks break or the seams open so as to admit the water.

It is very interesting to watch the progress of those honest catamaran-fellows, who live almost entirely in the surf, and who, independently of their chief purpose of attending the masullah boats, are much employed as messengers to the ships in the roads, even in the worst weather. Strange as it may seem, they contrive, in all seasons, to carry letters off quite dry, though, in getting across the surf, they may be overwhelmed by the waves a dozen times. I know of nothing to be compared to their industry and perseverance, except the pertinacity with which an ant carries a grain of corn up a wall, though tumbled down again and again.

I remember one day being sent with a note for the commanding officer of the flag-ship, which Sir Samuel Hood was very desirous should be sent on board ; but as the weather was too tempestuous to allow even a masullah boat to pass the surf, I was obliged to give it to a catamaran man. The poor fellow drew off his head a small skull-cap made apparently of some kind of skin, or oil-cloth, or bladder, and having deposited his despatches therein, proceeded to execute his task.

We really thought, at first, that our messenger must have been drowned even in crossing the inner bar, for we well-nigh lost sight of him in the hissing yeast of waves in which he and his catamaran appeared only at intervals, tossing about like a cork in a pot of boiling water. But by far the most difficult part of his task remained after he had reached the comparatively smooth space between the two lines of surf, where we could observe him paddling to and fro as if in search of an opening in the moving wall of water raging between him and the roadstead. In fact, he was watching for a favourable moment, when, after the dash of some high wave, he might hope to make good his transit in safety.

After allowing a great many seas to break before he attempted to cross the outer bar, he at length seized the proper moment, and turning his little bark to seaward, paddled out as fast as he could. Just as the gallant fellow, however, reached the shallowest part of the bar, and we fancied him safely across, a huge wave, which had risen with unusual quickness, elevated its foaming crest right before him, curling upwards many feet higher than his shoulders. In a moment he cast away his paddle, and leaping on his feet, he stood erect on his catamaran, watching with a bold front the advancing bank of water. He kept his position, quite undaunted, till the steep face of the breaker came within a couple of yards of him, and then leaping head foremost, he pierced the wave in a horizontal direction with the agility and confidence of a dolphin. We had scarcely lost sight of his feet, as he shot through the heart of the wave, when such a dash took place as must have crushed him to pieces had he stuck by his catamaran, which was whisked, instantly afterwards, by a kind of somerset, completely out of the water by its rebounding off the sandbank. On casting our eyes beyond the surf, we felt much relieved by seeing our shipwrecked friend merrily dancing on the waves at the back of the surf, leaping more than breast-high above the surface, and looking in all directions, first for his paddle, and then for his catamaran. Having recovered his oar, he next swam, as he best could, through the broken surf, to his raft, mounted it like a hero, and once more addressed himself to his task.

By this time, as the current always runs fast along the shore, he had drifted several hundred yards to the northward farther from his point. At the second attempt to penetrate the surf, he seemed to have made a small miscalculation, for the sea broke so very nearly over him, before he had time to quit his catamaran and dive into still water, that we thought he must certainly have been drowned. Not a whit, however, did he appear to have suffered, for we soon saw him again swimming to his rude vessel. Many times in succession was he thus washed off and sent whirling towards the beach, and as often obliged to dive head foremost through the waves. But at last, after very nearly an hour of incessant struggling, and the loss of more than a mile of distance, he succeeded, for the first time, in reaching the back of the surf, without having parted company either with his paddle or with his catamaran. After this it became all plain sailing ; he soon paddled off to the Roads, and placed the admiral's letter in the first lieutenant's hands as dry as if it had been borne in a despatch-box across the court-yard of the Admiralty, in the careful custody of my worthy friend the late Mr. Nutland, the porter.

I remember one day, when on board the Minden, receiving a note from the shore by a catamaran lad, whom I told to wait for an answer. Upon this he asked for a rope, with which, as soon as it was given him, he made his little vessel fast, and lay down to sleep in the full blaze of a July sun. One of his arms and one of his feet hung in the water, though a dozen sharks had been seen cruising round the ship. A tacit contract, indeed, appears to exist between the sharks and these people, for I never saw, nor can I remember ever having heard of any injury done by one to the other. By the time my answer was written, the sun had dried up the spray on the poor fellow's body, leaving such a coating of salt, that he looked as if he had been dusted with flour. A few fanams—a small copper coin—were all his charge, and three or four broken biscuits in addition sent him away the happiest of mortals.

It has sometimes occurred to me, that professional men, both in the army and in the navy, ought to study all the tactics of these masullah boats, and to make themselves acquainted with the principle of their construction. Of what infinite importance to the army, for instance, might not fifty or a hundred of these boats have proved when our troops were landed, through the surf, at the mouth of the Adour in 1814 !

It is matter of considerable surprise to every one who has seen how well the chain pier at Brighton stands the worst weather, that no similar work has been devised at Madras. The water is shallow, the surf does not extend very far from the beach, and there seems really no reason why a chain pier should not be erected, which might answer not only for the accommodation of passengers, but for the transit of goods to and from the shore.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE SUNNYASSES.

If, by means of any contrivance, a man were to visit the moon, and afterwards, on returning to the earth, to set about giving us an account of his trip, the chances are, if he adhered to strict truth, that his narrative would prove a mighty dull one. A similar fate, and probably for the same reason, but too often attends those books about India which have nothing but bald and naked matter of fact to recommend them. It is not that in the East there are no objects of eminent curiosity in themselves, and well worthy of observation and record; but, unfortunately, they are generally not such as we in England can sympathise with. From wanting this link in the chain, the topic is deprived of that familiarity which alone can render distant descriptions either amusing or instructive; for we all know, that the nearer we approach to our own firesides, the more vivid the interest of any narrative becomes.

We read, for example, with the utmost avidity, the account of a riot in Piccadilly in which a policeman of the C division is killed, while we skip carelessly over the adjacent paragraph in the same newspaper, giving the details of a battle in Syria, between the Pacha of Egypt and the Grand Seignor, in which five thousand men on each side have left their bones to whiten in the wilderness. The solitary death of the poor constable affects us not only from its proximity, but from all its localities being familiar to us. We can readily imagine ourselves on the identical spot, and can even fancy the angle of the brickbat which did the mischief coming in contact with our own sconce. Those prime ministers to our curiosity, the reporters, have merely to touch in a light, or a shade, or a tint of exaggeration here and there, and the picture of all that passed stands as palpably before our mind's eye, as if Teniers, or Ostade, or, better still, our own inimitable Wilkie, had drawn the whole affray from the life.

In short, it matters not much whether recorded incidents be great or small—their interest in our eyes will ever be measured either by their actual geographical distance, or by that moral approximation in the sentiment belonging to them which at once brings home to our feelings the workings of the most remote relations between man and man. Nothing, indeed, can so effectually awaken our attention, or keep it permanently alive, as that which engages our familiar sympathies.

Of these truths we have a striking example in the case of Bishop Heber, who, evidently without study, but merely by giving the reins to his own exquisite taste, fancy, and learning, describes to us Indian scenery and manners, in a way of which we possess no other example. He wastes none of our thoughts by claiming attention to dry descriptions of fact, but trusting, unconsciously, to that artless simplicity both of thought and expression, and to that entire singleness of purpose which distinguished this most benevolent of men, he touches those chords only which are in unison with our most habitual and domestic feelings. It will be recollected that the unceasing object of this accomplished writer's labours was to fulfil the solemn injunctions of his Divine Master, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." And as Bishop Heber probably considered that he possessed far higher opportunities for the accomplishment of this glorious end than perhaps any other man has enjoyed since the days of the Apostles, so we at home feel our brightest hopes kindle under the inspiration of such an example. Without much exaggeration, we may be said to follow his footsteps with almost as much confidence in his truth as we should do those of an angel sent to administer peace on earth, and good-will towards men. Everything which he touches partakes of the brilliant colouring of his own glowing but well-regulated imagination; and, what is still more important and useful, everything he says is modified into practical application by the business-like sagacity of his most ordinary reflections upon what he describes. At the same time, the heartiest and most devout zeal may be traced in every line he writes; and as there never occurs anything wild or over-enthusiastic, we go along with him cheerfully and unreservedly, and travel in his company not only without fatigue, but with perpetual and varying delight in the companionship. Thus, step by step, we are taught to take a new and unexpected interest in things from which heretofore we have often turned with indifference or distaste.

It certainly is very fortunate that we possess Bishop Heber's journal, fresh and entire as it was written on the spot; for had the press been corrected by himself, though we might have obtained something very good, we should hardly have been allowed to peruse the unpremeditated expression of those sentiments and opinions which appear to have crowded to the surface in the unbounded fulness of his topic. Many of these must have been irretrievably chilled by the sober touch of subsequent reflection.

I remember, even on the spot itself, at Madras, being frequently made sensible how exceedingly small the interest of some of the most extraordinary of the native customs appeared, in comparison to that of the common-place usages in the Bungaloes of my own countrymen. A game at brag; a very moderate flirtation; even a sober cup of tea with an old friend; an evening drive along the Mount road, or a glance at the stars from Mr. Goldingham's observatory, generally proved an overmatch for the most curious ceremonies of the Hindoo population. With the whole Black Town at command as a field for local inquiry, I never entered it but twice. The first time I was obliged to sound a hasty retreat, in consequence of the crowd, heat, and the most villanous compound of smells that ever offended nostril. On the second occasion, I merely passed through it hastily, and not at all in quest of adventures, but in order to take tiffin or luncheon with a friend, who resided to the northward of the town.

After riding for some distance, I half repented of my purpose, for it was raging hot, and the first airs of the young sea-breeze had scarcely begun to fan the surface of the water along a narrow strip of the sea parallel to the beach. Only those native boats, called pattymars, and one or two other small coasters, whose shallow draught of water enabled them to approach the shore, could avail themselves of these fitful swirls, which swept

from time to time towards the land, and then died away again, for a full hour before the regular sea-breeze blew in from the offing. As yet, however, not a leaf of any tree was put in motion, and not a bird could be seen ; all nature, indeed, seemed to have fallen asleep—not a sound was to be heard except the ceaseless dash of the restless surf.

I rode slowly along, well-nigh suffocated for want of air, scarcely shaded from the direct rays of the sun by my old friends, the cocoa-nuts, and tormented by the dazzling reflection from the coral sand, almost as white as snow, which seemed to burn the horse's feet. So entire was the solitude, that I had not the least expectation of meeting a single soul, native or European ; and I might reasonably enough have recorded the fact, that at such a season not only every kind of work was discontinued in India, but even their religious ceremonies were intermitted.

Just as I had made this reflection in the generalising spirit which is so very tempting, my ear caught the sound of a set of tom-toms, or native drums, sounding at a distance in the wood ; and after advancing a few hundred yards farther, I came to an opening facing the sea, in which were assembled at least a thousand natives. In the centre of the area stood a pole or mast, some thirty or forty feet high, bearing across its top a long yard or beam, slung nearly in the middle, and stretching both ways to the distance of forty or fifty feet. One end of the yard was held down by several men, so low as nearly to touch the ground, while the other rose proportionably high into the air. Near the upper extremity of this yard, underneath a canopy gaudily ornamented with flowers and loose festoons of drapery, I was astonished to observe a human being suspended, as it seemed, by two slender cords. He was not hanging perpendicularly, like a criminal, by the neck, but floated, as it were, horizontally in the air, as a bird flies, with his arms and legs moving freely about. Round his waist there was slung a bag, or basket, filled with fruits and flowers, which he scattered from time to time amongst the delighted crowd beneath, who rent the forest with shouts of admiration.

On approaching nearer to the ring, I discovered, with no small astonishment and horror, that the native who was swinging about in the air, though apparently enjoying his elevation, was actually hung upon hooks passing through his flesh ! There was nothing, however, in his appearance or manner indicating pain, though he must have been in no small suffering, I should suppose ; for no rope or strap passed round him to take off the weight, and the only means of suspension consisted in two bright hooks, inserted in his back. At first I felt unwilling to advance, but the natives, who appeared to be enchanted with the ceremony, begged me to come on.

The man, who was sailing about in the air at the time of my arrival, having been lowered down and unhooked, another fanatic was summoned. He was not dragged along reluctantly and with fear, but advanced briskly and cheerfully from the pagoda, in front of which he had prostrated himself flat on his face. A native priest then came forward, and, with the tip of his finger, marked out the spot where the hooks were to be inserted. Another officiating priest now began to thump the victim's back with his hand, and to pinch it violently, while a third dexterously inserted the hooks under the skin and cellular membrane, just below the shoulder-blade. As soon as this was effected, the devotee leaped gaily on his feet, and, as he rose, a basin of water, which had previously been dedicated to Shiva, was dashed in his face. He was then marched in procession from the pagoda towards a little platform on one side of the area in which the mast and yard were placed. Numerous drums and shrill-sounding pipes, mixed with the sound of many voices, gave token of his approach.

On mounting the platform, he tore away a number of chaplets and coronals of flowers by which he had been ornamented, scattering the fragments amongst the eager crowd. His dress, if such it can be called, besides the usual langooti or slight band round the waist, consisted of nothing but a very short jacket, covering the shoulders and half of the arm, and a pair of drawers, reaching nearly to the knee, both being made of an open net-work, the meshes of which were an inch wide.

As the natives, so far from objecting to my being present, encouraged me to come forward, I mounted the scaffold, and stood close by to make sure there was no deception practised. The hooks, which were formed of highly polished steel, might be about the size of a small shark-hook, but without any barb ; the thickness being rather less than a man's little finger. The points of the hooks being extremely sharp, they were inserted without lacerating the parts, and so adroitly, that not a drop of blood flowed from the orifices ; in fact, the native, who appeared to suffer no pain, conversed easily with those about him. I may add, as the contrary has often been reported, that there was not, on this occasion at least, the slightest appearance of intoxication. To each hook was attached a strong cotton line, which, after certain ceremonies, was tied to the extremity of the yard-arm, drawn to the scaffold by ropes. As soon as the lines had been made fast, the opposite end of the yard was again gradually pulled down by men on the other side of the ring, and thus the Sunnyass was raised fifty or sixty feet over the heads of the admiring multitude, who all shouted as he ascended.

To show his perfect self-possession, he took from the pouch tied round his waist handfuls of flowers, and, occasionally, a single lime, which, with a merry countenance and a cheerful voice, he jerked amidst the crowd. Nothing could exceed the eagerness of the natives to catch these holy relics ; and in order to give all of them an equal chance, the men stationed at the lower end of the yard walked with it round the ring, so as to bring the swinger successively over the different parts of the circle. To enable them to make this circuit, the centre of the yard was made to traverse on a double pivot, which allowed it not only to be lowered down at the ends, but to be carried round horizontally. In this way the suspended fanatic, who really appeared to enjoy it as a sport, was wheeled round three times, each circuit occupying about two minutes ; after which he was lowered down to the platform, and, the lines being cast off, he walked back to the pagoda, accompanied, as before, by the tom-toms and squeaking pipes. The hooks were then removed from his back, and

he joined the crowd who accompanied the next man from the pagoda to the platform—exactly as if he had not himself been exposed only the minute before to a trial which, let people say what they like of it, must have been very severe.

I remained near the spot for about an hour, during which four other men were hooked up in the same manner, and swung round, not one of them exhibiting the slightest symptom of uneasiness. During the whole time, I never detected anything even like impatience except once, when one of the men in the air appeared to fancy that the persons who were walking along with the lower end of the yard moved too slowly. He called out to them to quicken their pace, but with nothing angry in his tone, or any tremor in his voice, indicating suffering.

About four years after this time I had another opportunity of witnessing, near Calcutta, a number of these swingings, and a great variety of other tortures, to which these Sunnyasses exposed themselves, either in honour of their gods, or in pursuance of some idle vow.

The effect of such exhibitions as that just described, at Madras, when witnessed for the first time by a stranger from Europe, is that of unmixed wonder, and of curiosity highly gratified; but when he sees the same things repeated on an extensive scale, together with many hundreds of other examples of voluntary bodily exposure to sword, scourge, and even to fire, the degree of melancholy which it inspires in the traveller is very great. If it were possible to suppose that many thousands of persons of all ages could be subjected, by the agency of tyrannical force, to these severe sufferings, such a scene would be inconceivably horrible; but when the people themselves not only invite these tortures, and press eagerly forward to claim the honour of being first cut to pieces, or pierced with irons, or burned with hot spikes, or swung round in the air by hooks, or, in the extremity of their zeal, leap from scaffolds upon the points of naked swords—the sentiment of indignation is changed into commiseration. For it is impossible not to feel grieved upon seeing a population so deplorably degraded; and surely there must mingle with this feeling a strong desire to ameliorate the condition of people sunk so low in the scale of human nature.

These reflections naturally give rise to the two important questions—What harm do such exhibitions really produce? And in what manner are they to be checked? For we must recollect, that it is not always by official mandates that the habits of a nation can be suddenly changed; and even the East India Company, though exercising infinitely greater authority, both military and moral, over those countries, than ever Zengis Khan or Tamerlane possessed, cannot effectively interfere to change, on the instant, the manners and customs of their Hindoo subjects. They may upset one dynasty and reconstruct another—they may crush armies of hundreds of thousands of disciplined men, and even climb the Himaleh mountains to dispossess other conquerors of lands which have been won by the sword of brave men. What is of far more importance, and far more difficult of execution, they may extend, and indeed have already extended, the empire of law and justice far and wide over their vast possessions; and have given peace, security of person and property, and a wonderful degree of contentment, to the millions upon millions of their subjects. But with all this weight of influence, arising not merely from the possession of faithful armies and abundant wealth, but from the still higher source of authority—opinion, they dare not rashly interfere to stop many of those mischievous and superstitious proceedings of the natives, until all, or nearly all, the parties concerned are agreed in condemning them.

It becomes, therefore, the business of a statesman in India to watch his opportunity, and if he has reason to believe that the time has arrived when, with safety to the well-being of the state, he can interpose the high arm of authority to check abuses, he ought to act promptly and vigorously. The practice of Hindoo infanticide (thanks to the energy and sagacity of the late Colonel Walker) has been long abolished in India. In this way also the extensive local experience of the late governor-general, Lord William Bentinck, showed him that in suppressing the abominable practice of Suttees, or widow murder and suicide combined, he should carry with him the sympathies of the intelligent Hindoos themselves, and in no respect weaken our own political authority. He, therefore, boldly issued a Regulation (dated 4th December, 1829), positively forbidding the practice, and declaring its abettors to be murderers. Thus, by a single stroke of the pen, at the right moment, one of the most shocking and deteriorating of all the Hindoo usages was totally and effectually abolished.

If future authorities shall act with equal discretion, and only take care to time their interference with equal skill, there can be no doubt that very great ameliorations may be safely effected among the natives of India. If, for example, the improvements in the judicial and revenue systems, already alluded to, be carried forward very gradually, and in that right spirit which seeks only to apply practical remedies to admitted evils, we may hope to see, even in our own day, no small moral change for the better in the vast population of our splendid Eastern empire.

CHAPTER XV.

PALANKEEN TRAVELLING—IRRIGATING TANKS IN THE MYSORE COUNTRY.

It was my rare good fortune, while actually serving in my proper calling as a naval officer in India, and without the loss of a single day's time, to make two land journeys across the peninsula of Hindustan, and thus to see the interior of the country, which is seldom visited by sailors.

"Fair friends make fair winds," says the sea proverb, and so it proved in my case; for my kind patron Sir Samuel Hood, who, in true Nelson style, was always endeavouring to discover what would be most agreeable and useful to those under him, bethought him of a method of serving me professionally, at the same time putting it in my power to make one of the most delightful trips possible.

About the middle of the year 1813, his Majesty's ship Cornwallis, a seventy-four gun ship, built of

teak-wood from the coast of Malabar, was launched at Bombay, on the western side of India. The captain who was appointed to this new ship then commanded the Theban, at that time lying in Madras Roads, on the eastern side of the peninsula. But as this frigate required repairs, which could be given her only at Bombay, she was ordered round to that port. Fortunately for me, the officer appointed to command the Theban happened at this juncture to be cruising in another ship far away to the eastward amongst the Moluccas of the Philippine Islands; and Sir Samuel Hood offered me the temporary appointment as acting commander until her proper captain should join.

"You will have to go to Bombay," he said, "to refit the frigate and to bring her back to this side of India; but you may go either by sea, in the ship herself, or you may run over by land across the continent, only taking care that you reach Bombay in good time to relieve the officer in command of the Theban, that he may be free to go on board the Cornwallis."

I, of course, gladly availed myself of the alternative which enabled me to visit so interesting a part of India as the Mysore country, the scene of Hyder Ali's and Tippoo Sultan's wars, and so well known in Europe by the splendid catastrophe of Seringapatam.

The preparations for the journey were very soon made, and I hurried away from Madras as fast as I could, being stimulated into extraordinary despatch, not only by the wish to make the most of my opportunities, but by a latent apprehension that there must be some mistake in this piece of good fortune. I felt, indeed, as if it were all a dream, and could scarcely persuade myself that I was really and truly on the eve of making a journey through the interior of India, and that, in a week or ten days, I might actually be sleeping in the palace of Tippoo, or scrambling over the breach where that formidable enemy of the British name was found slain, under a vast pile of his devoted adherents.

I knew little or nothing of the mode of travelling in the East, and my stock of the language was as yet but small; albeit I had studied sedulously to acquire some knowledge of Hindustanee, which, although not the colloquial dialect of all parts of the country I was to pass through, I was told might be used for the purposes of travelling in every village. The cutwal, or head man, one of whose offices it is to assist travellers, can always speak this language, which, as I have been told, is a jargon, or *lingua franca*, consisting of Arabic, Persian, Sanscrit, a little sprinkling of Portuguese, and a still smaller dash of English, with here and there a stray word of Malay origin. Unfortunately, all languages are nearly equally difficult to me; and, certainly, had I not travelled in the country, I should never have advanced beyond the elementary sentences, "Give me a glass of water;" "Bring the palankeen;" "Go faster;" and so on, together with a moderate stock of those truncated little oaths which every one seems soonest to acquire, and without effort. But on a journey made quite alone, even the least apt mouth for languages is forced to model itself to the current speech of the high road. Hunger, thirst, and fatigue, are famous teachers of foreign dialects; and in all journeys there must occur many accidents which not only try the temper, but put the traveller on his mettle to explain his wants, or to extricate him from scrapes; and the emphatic lessons thus drilled into him, fix themselves on his memory, let it be ever so slippery.

The utility of languages to a naval officer is so great, not merely as a source of utility and enjoyment to himself, but of occasional advantage to the public service, that I would fain see it established as an Admiralty regulation that no midshipman should be allowed to pass for lieutenant who, besides French, could not read and speak moderately well either Spanish, Italian, or Hindustanee, the four great dialects with which naval men are likely to be much concerned. Such a regulation would cause a famous hullabaloo amongst the rising generation of officers, and many a deep curse would be launched at the suggestor of such a measure; but, ere long, both these execrators and the public service would feel the advantages of the rule.

My first thought was to cast about for letters of introduction; but an experienced Indian traveller told me not to mind such things, that they were scarcely ever required, and that my uniform alone would be an ample introduction.

"Take a passport with you," said my friend, "in case of accidents, and your blue coat, merely to show who and what you are, but nothing more; you will find a welcome, and a hearty one too, at every station, civil and military, over the whole country. You cannot possibly go wrong," he added; "and if at any time you should be at a loss, you have only to apply to the nearest English station for assistance, and straightway all the resources of the spot will be at your command."

With this comfortable assurance, I set off; but I confess I felt queerish the first night when jogging along all alone on the high road, in a country totally unknown to me, and of whose language I knew so very little. After tumbling and tossing about, greatly to the annoyance of the bearers, for about an hour, I fell asleep, but only to dream of tigers and robbers; till at length the palankeen was suddenly and violently jerked on one side, and then thrown on the ground. I awoke, of course, in great alarm, and on thrusting out my head, I saw a snake twisting about amongst the feet of the foremost bearers, who had dashed down their load, and were leaping to the right and left into the jungle. As my sword lay on one side of the palankeen, I lost no time in drawing it forth; and, before the caitiff could effect his escape, cut him in twain, to the great admiration of the bearers, who dropped back again, one by one, to the road. It is singular enough, that this was the only snake, so far as I recollect, which I ever saw in a wild state in India, though I must have travelled many thousands of miles in that country.

Palankeen travelling may be compared in some respects to sea voyaging; inasmuch as the traveller carries his house, furniture, kitchen, and wardrobe with him. He is not dependent, indeed, upon the wind for his progress; but he is almost as much influenced in his comforts by the weather as if he were at sea; while the bearers, though docile enough to a certain extent, can no more be put out of their own particular way than the monsoons or trade-winds. They must be allowed to

travel at certain hours and at a certain rate, and they claim the privilege of making as much noise as they please during their progress, greatly to the discomposure of new-comers, but, it is said, greatly to their own relief. Every resident possesses a palankeen as a matter of course, just as we in Europe own a hat or an umbrella. A gig or a saddle-horse might seem better comparisons; but in England, alas! many people sport neither gig nor horse;—in India, no person moves without his palankeen. Those who can afford to do things in style, or who choose to be stylish whether they can afford it or not, keep a dozen bearers; but moderate men, except on a journey, content themselves with half-a-dozen.

The palankeen, which is generally kept in the verandah of the house, is taken up by the bearers in the morning, who brush it out, wash it if necessary, place it near the door in some shady spot, and, if their master be not ready to start immediately after breakfast, they stretch themselves on the ground, in the shade, and either go to sleep, or continue chatting to one another in a low rumbling under-tone, in which the words are scarcely articulated. On the appearance of their master, they instantly bestir themselves without bidding—for it is one of the delights of Indian service, that the attendants seem to possess an intuitive faculty of discovering what is wanted; and it very rarely happens that they require to be spoken to or lectured. In truth, no one, until he has visited India, can form any just notion of the immense comfort of being waited on by those truly angelic fellows, the white-robed serving men of the East, or estimate the positive addition it makes to the sum of human happiness to be exempted from the wear and tear of looking after the habits, and studying the temper and humours of European domestics.

The palankeen-bearers, who form, I believe, a caste or class by themselves, are a faithful and diligent race of men; and, as it is their invariable custom to be honest, a traveller may leave anything loose in the palankeen with perfect safety. I have heard that it is not quite safe or fair to leave the brandy-bottle too much exposed, as poor human nature, under whatever colour of the skin it may be hid, is said never to be proof against the seductions of that wonderful tipple. For my part, I do not believe I ever tasted it till I came to travel in India; and then I was as much taken in as the savage king, so cleverly described by Captain Cook, who mistook a bottle of this new-found beverage for an avatar of one of his gods. A worthy friend of mine at Madras, just as I was starting, thrust his head into my palankeen, and cried out,

"Why, man, you have got *no* brandy! You cannot possibly get on without some support, as we call it:"

And running back to the house, he unlocked his private store, and deposited with me a small square nicely cut crystal bottle of cogniac, so delicious, that, he declared, it would bring a dead man alive again.

I forgot all about this supply till some days afterwards, during a sultry, choky afternoon in the jungle, when there was hardly a breath of wind aloft of sufficient force to stir even the tremulous leaf of the bamboo-tree; while down below, where the ground was parched up and riven into a net-work of crevices by the heat, the still air had reached that suffocating pitch which makes one feel close to death's door. The bearers had stopped at a sparkling well, or rather a natural fountain, from which a small stream of cool water gurgled and splashed over the rocks, and spread its refreshing influence for many yards on either side. Being burnt up with thirst, I leaped out, and in the next minute would have plunged my face into the basin formed by the falling drops, and drank down the water to my own destruction, had not one of the bearers gently interposed himself, and recommended me to put some brandy with the cold spring. I had no objection to this modification; but, as I longed for a deep potation, I put only a couple of thimblefuls into a tumbler, and then filling it to the brim with water, swallowed the whole at one delectable gulp. The sensation produced by this experiment was so agreeable and new, that I could not well resist the temptation of repeating it; and, although the veteran bearer who dipped the water for me a second time, smiled as he filled the glass, I did not comprehend the meaning of his expression of countenance till some time afterwards. I also told him to fill one of the goglets, and to carry it in his hand, that it might enjoy the benefit of the breeze caused by our rapid advance. By and by I felt an irresistible desire to take another drop of the very weakest brandy and water; and, as it proved three times more delicious than the first, but left behind it a treble degree of thirst, I tried it again. I now became impatient, and called to the bearers to go faster.

"Go faster still!" I said, rather sharply. Upon this they moved on so quickly that I was nearly jerked out. I then desired them to stop; an order more easily obeyed than the first. I took advantage of the pause to mix one more glass of what seemed very weak grog.

"Go faster!" I roared out—"go faster!" as I emptied the glass. But their utmost speed seemed to me a snail's pace; and, after a few more exclamations, reproaches, and threats, I leaped out of the palankeen, and rushing forward to enforce my orders, fell flat on my face in the dust! The terrified bearers dropped the palankeen on the road, and, scampering into the forest, left me all alone to crawl back to my nest as I best could.

I know not how long I slept, but on waking, I perceived that the bearers had again lifted the palankeen, and, having come to the termination of their night's journey, were just setting me down by the side of a tank, twenty or five-and-twenty miles from the spot where I had frightened them away the evening before.

The sun's rays were beginning to flicker through the lowest brushwood, dripping with dew; and the air felt so cool and elastic, that I begged to have a bath, to clear my noddle. I undressed myself accordingly; and, while I sat on the steps in front of the pagoda, allowed the bearers to pour in succession a dozen large jars of water over my head. After this, as soon as I was dressed, I called the men together, distributed the remainder of the brandy amongst them, and, in spite of my friend's assurance at starting, found I got on a great deal better ever afterwards.

When a journey of more than thirty or forty miles is to be made in India, it is usual to acquaint the palankeen-boys with this intention, that they may make the fitting preparations, in the shape of torches and oil, besides rice and curry stuff, and sundry other matters for themselves. Their cook, also, who makes the thirteenth man amongst them if it be a full set, sees his pots and pans in order for the march. A person—I think one of the bearers—is also got in readiness with a bamboo across his shoulder, to each end of which he attaches a light travelling trunk, made generally of basket-work covered with green wax-cloth. The night season, for obvious reasons, is generally chosen for travelling in India, both by bearers and travellers. The heat of the day interferes both with the length and speed of the journey; and although the person inside of the palankeen is shaded from the direct rays of the sun, he is sure to be well-nigh suffocated with the heat, or choked with the dust thrown up by the bearers' feet. At night, even in the hottest season, there is generally some dew to lay the dust, and the air is of course cooler.

People generally start after an early dinner; and as the night falls, the torch is lighted and held by one of the bearers, who runs along with it by the side of the palankeen. The torch, at first, may be about four feet long, and nearly as thick as a man's arm; it is made of rags and strips of cotton, well saturated with oil and grease, and then wound into a firm cylinder. The flame is supplied with oil from a tin vessel carried in the torch-bearer's other hand. Unfortunately for the traveller, it happens to be more convenient for the men that the torch should be held on the windward side of the palankeen than on the lee side, and consequently the smoke often blows right in upon him. During the early part of my journey, I endeavoured, by the wonted artillery of commands, scolds, entreaties, and bribes, to reform this matter, but all without effect. "Bap ke dustoor," was the only answer I got—"It is father's custom." The truth is, that if the torch be carried by a man to leeward, his shadow interferes with its light if he holds it in one hand, and the flame burns him if he holds it in the other. I have often made the musaljee change sides; but I could hear him chattering and growling sadly until he fancied me asleep, and then round he went again to windward. At length I discovered that it was much the best way to submit with what patience I possessed—which was not much—for I never found my stock of this virtue improved by attempting, in wretched Hindustanee, to explain to persons who did not wish to understand, the propriety of doing that which they believed improper, and felt to be exceedingly inconvenient. In some parts of the country, these torches are made of long slips of well-dried bamboo, occasionally of faggots bound up; and at other places they consist of long thick reeds. I could seldom prevail upon the bearers to use a lantern, unless when their stock of faggots had been burned out. The light, they said, was not sufficient for the safe guidance of their feet.

The palankeen is about six feet long by two and a half wide, and serves at night-time for a bed, in the day-time for a parlour. In the front part of the interior is fitted a broad shelf, underneath which a drawer pulls out, and over the shelf a net is stretched, such as we see in travelling carriages. In the after-part, as a sailor would call it, there is generally fixed a shelf for books, a net for fruit or any loose articles, and hooks for hats, caps, towels, and other things. There are two doors or sliding partitions in each side, fitted with Venet an blinds in the upper panel; and in each end of the palankeen are placed two little windows. Many travellers choose to have a lamp fixed in one corner, with a glass face turned inwards, but trimmed from without, either for reading or for sleeping by—for your Indian must always have a light to see how to shut his eyes, as Pat said. The bottom or seat is made of strips of ratan, like that of a chair, over which is laid a light elastic mattress, made either of horse-hair, or, which is still better, I believe, of the small shavings used in dressing the bamboo and ratan.

Across the palankeen, at a distance of a foot and a half from the end, is hung a flat square cushion, buttoned tightly from side to side, for the traveller's back to rest against; while his feet are prevented from slipping forwards by a cross-bar, similar in principle to the stretchers in a boat, against which the rowers plant their feet. This bar, which slides up and down in slits cut at the sides of the palankeen, is capable of being shifted nearer to, or further from the end, according to the length of the voyager's legs, or to his choice of position. In the space behind the cushion or rest for the back, are stowed away, in the day-time, the sheets, blankets, pillow, and other night-things; and in the net above, two or three changes of clothes, in case of any accident separating the traveller from his heavy baggage. In the drawers may be kept shaving articles, and such nick-knacks as a compass, thermometer, sketch-book. On the shelf behind, a few books—among which, of course, will be found a road-book and a Hindustanee vocabulary—jostling with a tea-pot and sugar-canister. Under the mattress, an infinity of small things may be hid, provided they be flattish. In each corner of this moving house are placed little round sockets for bottles and glasses. Many other odds and ends of comforts and conveniences suggest themselves as the journey advances, or may be found cut and dry in expensive palankeens. I speak merely of what mine possessed, and it was a very ordinary affair—cheap, strong, and not too heavy. Along the top on the outside is laid a wax cloth cover, which, when not in use, is rolled up; but in rainy weather, or when the night air becomes chill, this cloth is let so loose as to envelop the whole palankeen.

At each end there is fixed a single strong smooth bar, which rests on the bearers' shoulders. This pole, which is somewhat thicker than a man's arm, is possessed of none of the elasticity which gives such an unpleasant motion to a sedan-chair, being secured tightly to the corners of the palankeen by iron rods. To one of these poles there is generally suspended a beautifully shaped rattan basket, holding a goglet or water-pitcher, which is still further defended from injury by an open tracery of split ratans, resembling not a little the work in relief on the buttresses and pinnacles of Henry VII.'s chapel in Westminster Abbey. This goglet is hung in front, that the dew which exudes from its pores may be evaporated by the current of air

it encounters as the bearers move on ; and thus, even in the hottest weather, a cool draught of water may always be obtained. Under the pole behind are hung a tea-kettle, coffee-pot, and a curious but useful kind of wash-hand basin, imported from China, of cylindrical shape, made of wood highly varnished.

Some people add a brace of pistols to the equipment of their palankeen ; but I preferred, if it came to the push, rather to be robbed in peace, than to fight a pitched battle with desperadoes about a trumpery watch, or a handful of pagodas. At the very best, one could only hope to repel the boarders, and perhaps put one or two of them to death ; in return for which, a broken pate, or a slice with a grass-cutter's knife, would remain as lasting evidences of the traveller's prowess in the jungle. As for tigers, I was assured that in ninety-nine cases in a hundred, they are quite as glad to make off from man as man is glad to get off from them ; and, in truth, their instinct must be but small, or their hunger inordinately great, if they have not learned by this time, that Mr. Homo is much more than a match for Mr. Brute, with all his claws and teeth. Of this fact I saw ample proofs in the course of my journey, as I shall have occasion presently to relate in describing a great native festival near Seringapatam, where animals really wild, and not such tame creatures as are to be seen in our misnamed "wild beast" shows, were exhibited and baited for our edification, within twenty-four hours after being caught in the forest.

If the journey to be made in the palankeen be a short one, say thirty or forty miles, it may be run over in the night, with only one stop, during which the bearers light a fire and dress their supper. Including this delay, I have made, between eight in the evening and half-past six in the morning, a journey of full forty miles—that is, from Madras to the Seven Pagodas, or Mahabalipooram, the city of the great god Bali. On ordinary occasions, for short distances between house and house, when you are going out to dinner, only a couple of men run under each pole, and at such times the palankeen is carried at the rate of four or five miles an hour. But on journeys, there are generally three men to each pole, which employs six men out of the twelve, while the others run by their side, ready to relieve their companions at intervals. During the whole time they are in progress, they make a noise which it is not easy to describe. Sometimes it consists of a long, deep, but slightly varied groan, in which the whole party join in correct time. Mostly, however, the men in front use one kind of groan or grunt, which is answered by another from those behind. These sounds often approach to a scream, and frequently include words of warning against stones in the way, or pools of water ; but these are articulated so indistinctly, that it is difficult to catch them. I remember one exclamation frequently used, "Kurab high !" Occasionally, when it is wished to make a great exertion, the leader of the song suddenly calls out some such word as "Shabash !" to which every one answers, and away they spring at double speed, while the tone of the music, so to call it, is changed from a dull sort of grumbling bass, to an angry and sharp intonation, mixed with something almost insulting or reproachful in its tone.

A stranger, or griffin, as he is called, on first getting into a palankeen at Madras, is naturally much alarmed, and often rather distressed, at these hideous sounds, as he naturally fancies the men must be suffering dreadfully under their load. There have even been instances of Johnny Newcomes so prodigiously sensitive or spoony, as actually to get out and walk in the sun, to the particular amusement of the bearers, who, it is alleged, make their yells doubly horrible when they fancy they have caught a griffin. I do confess, that at first, it feels a little queer to be carried along on men's shoulders ; but this is a great waste of sympathy, inasmuch as every man so carrying you is not only a servant at will, but a very well paid, contented servant, and one of the caste whose greatest anxiety and pleasure it is to be so employed—who makes money by it, and saves it, and buys land, and becomes, in time, a gentleman in his way. I never remember to have heard the brawny Highlanders, who carry people about in chairs in Edinburgh, Bath, and elsewhere, accused of any extra servility, because they lifted the box containing their employer, instead of driving the horses which dragged the carriage holding the same personages. In short, all these matters turn on usage, and the deuce is in it if the parties most concerned are not the best judges of what, upon the whole, is most to their mind. But the fashion now-a-days is to cram compassion down contented people's throats, and, in the true spirit of the philosophers of Laputa, or the needy knife-grinder's friend in the Anti-jacobin, to make happy men miserable, in order that they may be reconverted to happiness by some patent general principle—an invaluable process, always best known, it would appear, to those who are personally ignorant of all the practical details of the subject !

This song, or cry, or groan, or whatever it be, of the palankeen-bearers of India, is different in different parts of the country ; while, at some places, as at Bombay, they use none at all, but move along quite quietly. There seems to be as much art in carrying a palankeen as in driving a carriage or riding a horse. Some bearers shake you to pieces, while others glide along so gently, that you are scarcely conscious of any motion. In every part of the country which I have visited, except Cananore and Mangalore, on the coast of Malabar, the palankeen is carried in a straightforward direction, that is, parallel to the road, so that the hind-bearers follow exactly the footsteps of those in front. But at the places alluded to, on the western coast, they carry it nearly across the road, so that the hind-bearers are but little astern of the others, the poles making an angle with the direct line of about seventy-five degrees. This crab-kind of fashion of moving sideways, which resembles that of the abominable omnibuses of Europe, is anything but agreeable. I well remember the first time I encountered it feeling quite sick, and a little giddy. It was in the evening, about sunset, and I had shut to the doors to take a nap, when, after a little time, I thought there was something very odd in the motion, and I sat up to consider what it could be. On opening one of the doors, and looking out, I beheld all the objects passing by me at such a strange obliquity of angle, that I began to suspect I must have been again taking to the brandy-bottle !

When a long journey is to be made, you must decide upon one of two ways, and either travel through with one set of bearers, which is the slowest method, or you must make arrangements for having relays of fresh men laid for you at different stations on the road. If one set go all all the way, and be good of their kind, they will undertake to carry a moderate-sized traveller about twenty-five miles a-day for a continuance, which is surely great going. Travelling by dawk, as it is called, or when the bearers are laid, is the most expeditious way of proceeding, but, of course, much the most expensive. Before starting, you must write letters to the different collectors of the various districts through which you mean to pass, stating the time you mean to set out, and the route you are to follow. It seems to signify little whether or not you are personally acquainted with these gentlemen, for it is the universal fashion in India to be obliging and hospitable. The bearers written for will therefore always be found waiting for you at their assigned stations. It sometimes answers equally well, and saves time and trouble, to send on as many sets of bearers as may be required to make the journey. Thus, when I left Madras on my second journey overland, I sent forward one set to the Mount, eight miles distant; another to Sri Parmatura, twenty miles further; a third to Baul Chitty's Choultry, twenty-four miles further, which was about twenty short of Arcot, my first halting-place. I have already mentioned, that each set of bearers consists of thirteen men, when a journey is to be made. The ordinary price of this description of labour, when I was in India, and I don't suppose it has changed materially since, was three fanams (or about sixpence and a farthing) to each bearer for every ten English miles, or six shillings and ninepence for the whole thirteen, which is about eightpence per mile. An additional sum is paid for those sets which are sent on past the first stage, and of course something extra is paid to them daily when they are kept waiting.

Fanams, rupees, and pagodas, form the money current at Madras. There are twelve fanams in a rupee, and forty-five in a pagoda. The word rupee (or rupiya) means silver, and is applied to that metal generally. What we term fanam, I remember being told was called "fullum" by the natives: this, as etymologies go, is but a small shift. But where the word pagoda came from, I believe is not known; the coin so called by us is named "hoon," or "hoong," by the natives; but the temples which we style pagodas, are called by them "dewul." In China, the sacred edifices also receive at our hands the name of Pagoda, though, in the European slang of the spot, they are called Joss-houses—evidently from the Portuguese Dios. The word Gentoo, like that of pagoda, is also, I believe, entirely of European origin; but though much used by Orme and other writers on India, I do not think it is anywhere a current word in that country, even amongst the English. I have indeed heard the name of Gentoos applied to the athletic race of palankeen-bearers who belong to a district north of Madras. They are naturally drawn to the presidency, which is the most wealthy spot in the country, just as the gallegoes of the north-west of Spain are drawn to Lisbon, and other large cities of the European Peninsula; or like the hardy race of Pats and Donalds of our own country, to the rich foci of London and Edinburgh.

When travelling dawk or post, the same set of men will rattle you along for about twenty miles, without stopping, in five or six hours at most; and then, if all things have been well ordered, the palankeen will be transferred to the new set without its being allowed to touch the ground. You pay your bearers at the end of the stage—and it is amusing enough to trace a characteristic resemblance between these Asiatics and an animal apparently so dissimilar to them; I mean an English post-boy, or a French postilion. If you pay them their exact customary due, they make you a profound salam, and are perfectly contented; but if you give them a single fanam over and above their allowance, they instantly smoke you to be a griffin, or an ignoramus, or both, and therefore fair game for plucking. So they either begin to beg for more money, or petition for a sheep for supper—their choicest feast—for they are not of the Banyan race, who eat no animal food. They also exhibit such wretched looks of supplication, and make so many signals of starvation, that your purse opens even if your heart does not, and at last you yield to their much importunity. Here, however, the comparison with the post-boy ceases; for if you give him an expressly extra shilling, or a mug of ale to warm him, he drinks your honour's health, and looks pleased. But I never once contrived, by any stretch of over-payment, to extort or bribe a smile out of the palankeen-bearers of India. On the contrary, the more you give, the more discontented they look; alternately eyeing the cash and the road travelled over, and then, after glancing sulkily at one another in the most provoking style possible, they silently turn about and march off.

There is a current Joe Miller story in the East, of a gentleman who laid and lost a bet, that he would not only satisfy, but astonish his bearers, whom he had taken only ten miles. In order to make sure, as he supposed, he gave them, besides their pay, a whole pagoda as a gratuity, being more than double their hire. They stood stock still, however—turned the piece of gold over in their hands, as if it had been a base coin;—and at length, with that dissatisfied tone and manner with which people so often shipwreck their prospects, by substituting the word claim for the word favour, they whined out "Perhaps master will give us a sheep!"

I have mentioned that the travelling is generally at night; and, I believe, it is so stipulated, when you are moving with only one set of bearers, that they shall be allowed the entire choice of the hours of motion and rest. When the bearers are posted on the road, there is no necessity for this limitation; and the secret of agreeable travelling appears to lie chiefly in contriving to reach some military or civil station about the hour of breakfast, tiffin, or dinner. I have mentioned before, that I carried no letters of introduction with me, but trusted entirely to the habitual hospitality of the authorities scattered over the country; nor was I ever disappointed. I remember, one morning at sunrise, coming in sight of Nundydroog, perhaps the most remarkable of those huge round-backed hill-forts for which India is celebrated. It looks like

a considerable mountain ; for though only twelve hundred feet high, it rises so abruptly from the plain, that it appears double its real altitude. The morning air was cold and clear, and all things about us lay glistening with dew, which had settled on every leaf and every blade of grass, during one of those serene and starlight evenings, of which the month of October boasts, I think, more than any other in the whole year. This applies to almost all parts of the northern hemisphere which I have visited, from the Missouri to the Yellow Sea.

Between the fort of Nundydroog and the rising ground on which we stopped to view the prospect, there extended a valley some six or eight miles across, the whole bottom of which was marked with a succession of artificial tanks, used for irrigating myriads of rice-fields lying below the level of these huge ponds. But as the best specimens of the picturesque and beautiful, or useful, always stand but a poor chance against the claims of a sharp-set appetite, I urged my fellows to jog on merrily, in hopes of reaching the military station in time for the commandant's breakfast ; and, instead of admiring the landscape, I kept feasting my imagination all the way with visions of rich curries and hot rolls, and almost fancied I could snuff at a league's distance the aromatic perfumes of the delicious hookah.

" How shall I attack the commandant ?" said I to myself ; " for I have no letter to him, neither know I my future friend's name, nor even his rank."

As we entered the suburbs, we fell in with a sepoy, of whom I asked whereabouts the commanding officer's house lay ? " That is Captain Dowglas's house," he said, pointing to a bungalow near us. So in my bearers trotted without more ado, snorting and groaning with a double dose of yells, as if they had an inkling of my being an unbidden guest, and wished to give timely warning that a stranger was approaching. The owner of the mansion came forward in his white jacket to receive me.

" Sir," said I, to the commandant, " I am an officer of Sir Samuel Hood's ship, travelling toward Mysore, and I have done myself the honour of waiting upon you with my passport."

" Have you breakfasted ?" was the characteristic reply, as he unfolded the paper and glanced slightly over it to learn my name. On my saying that I had not, he called out, " Boy ! let us have breakfast instantly ; put the palankeen into the verandah : we have a good deal to show you here, and there are some pleasant people, whom I shall be glad to introduce to you."

My host, I found, had been seventeen years in India ; and it was pleasant to be able to give him, in return for his hospitality, a budget of news from Antrim and Belfast. By and by several of his brother officers, and some of his friends in the civil service, came dropping in, all as anxious to be useful to the stranger in his researches as if they had known him for years. I thus soon felt myself completely at home. A young officer accompanied me next day to the rock ; and as I had previously been " reading up," or cramming myself with the histories of Orme, Wilks, and Dirom, I surprised my friend by the minuteness of my knowledge of all the technicalities and the military events. What interested me, however, fully as much as the traces of Lord Cornwallis' siege and unsuccessful storming of the fort of Nundydroog in 1792, was the view from the top of the rock, and particularly the sight of a vast number of those extraordinary tanks, or artificial ponds, for irrigating the rice-fields for which that part of the peninsula is so remarkable.

The table-land of Mysore, which stands several thousand feet above the level of the sea, is not strictly a flat plain, as the name would seem to imply ; neither is it mountainous, or even very hilly ; and yet the surface is extremely uneven, being moulded into gently sloping ridges, which form between them a succession of long valleys slightly inclined, broad and shallow, and winding about in all directions. Across almost every one of these valleys the natives have thrown embankments, some of them of very ancient date, though some are even so recent as the dynasty of Hyder. These walls, or bunds, as they are called, are made of considerable strength, and when of small extent, they generally curve upwards, so as to offer their convex side to the pressure of the water ; but if they be a mile or several miles in length, the embankments assume a waving, snake-like shape, in what particular view I know not, but I suppose from some idea of strength. One valley was pointed out to me, which might be about a mile broad and forty miles long from end to end : this included between thirty and forty tanks, some large and some small, every square yard of the intermediate space between the bunds being richly cultivated, while the surrounding country appeared to be condemned to nearly perennial sterility ; indeed, I believe that almost the whole rice crop of Mysore is derived from artificial irrigation.

This vast supply of water is gained partly by the method of tanks just described, and partly by tapping the Cauvery and other rivers by means of subaqueous dams, called annicuts, built, during the dry season, diagonally across the bed of the stream. The effect of these dams is to direct a portion of the river into lateral trenches stretching far and wide over the country. From these it is again drawn off to water the rice-fields. I remember hearing a traveller describe the manner in which the greater river Indus is tapped, or drawn off in this manner to the right and left, for the purposes of agriculture, till the unhappy river is sometimes fairly exhausted, and its channel left dry ! One is so much accustomed to consider the mighty mass of waters forming a river of any magnitude as something beyond the power of man to control, that it requires good evidence to satisfy our incredulity on this point. But if the Indus, in the districts alluded to, resemble the Mississippi and many other streams flowing over extensive alluvial countries, there need be no difficulty in conceiving such a transfer of the whole of its waters from the ordinary bed of the stream to the fields on either side ; because rivers which traverse deltas almost invariably flow along the summits of ridges somewhat higher than the adjacent country. These ridges, it is true, are so wide and flat, that their elevation at most places can scarcely be detected by the eye ; but still the inclination of their sides is abundantly sufficient to admit of water draining away from, instead of flowing towards the river.

The Cauvery, after traversing the Mysore country, and forming, by one of its fantastic loops, the celebrated island of Seringapatam, is precipitated, over the edge of the table-land, into the Carnatic, in a series of magnificent falls, which I visited in the course of my journey. It then flows along quietly to the sea, past Trichinopoly and Tanjore, and joins the sea near Tranquebar. During the fierce struggles between the French and English in the south of India, the embankments of the river Cauvery were frequently cut, and the whole country, in consequence, laid under water. To explain this, it must be mentioned, that as rivers which run along deltas, or along ground nearly level, are liable to flow over their banks during the rainy season, it becomes necessary, in order to prevent the country being inundated, to raise walls or embankments to confine the stream. These (which are called in Louisiana, levées, in India, bunds,) being raised a little higher than the surface of the river at its highest, confine the stream within proper limits. But as the floods of each successive year bring down a prodigious mass of gravel and sand—the wear and tear of the mountains, fields, and forests, through which the tributary streams have passed—a certain portion of the largest and heaviest of these materials must subside, and remain at the bottom when the river reaches the low grounds, where its rate of motion is much diminished. This addition, though it be small in any one year, gradually raises the bed of the river. If this rise were not carefully met by a correspondent annual elevation of the artificial embankment, it is obvious that the water, in the course of time, would periodically flow over and submerge the country. The consequence of these alternate struggles between the waters trying to escape and man insisting upon confining them, has been to lift the whole body of the Cauvery in its passage across the Carnatic several feet above the highest level of the surrounding country. The power of deluging the adjacent district was therefore a very obvious though a dreadful weapon in the hands of whichever party held possession of the banks during those formidable wars in which the French and English contended for the sovereignty of Hindustan. In the long period of peaceful and secure repose which those regions have enjoyed since the contest has been terminated by the unquestioned supremacy of one party, the supply of water, so curiously raised into the air, has been appropriated exclusively to the irrigation of the country.

In the upper lands of Mysore, the peasants are dependent chiefly on their tanks for moisture, as the rains are uncertain in quantity, and transient in their effects. The stock of water collected in these numberless and extensive tanks or ponds, many of which well deserve the name of lakes, is capable of being distributed in the precise quantity and at the precise times required. I have often been amused at observing with what scrupulous care the persons appointed to distribute the water let it off from these magnificent reservoirs. The thirsty soil of Mysore, parched and riven by the heat, drinks up the fluid with a grateful kind of relish, a sort of animated enjoyment, at which I was never tired of looking.

In describing things which lie so much out of the ordinary course of observation, one becomes sensible of the poverty of language. Thus the word "Tank" suggests to most people the idea of a common cistern attached to a dwelling-house, and filled with rain-water from pipes along the roof. The word "Pond," again, recalls images of muddy water, draggled post-horses, rank weeds, and a combined fleet of ducks and geese engaged in common warfare against frogs and worms. To call the tanks of Mysore by the name of lakes would be nearer the mark, for many of them well deserve that appellation. The Moota Talou, for example, or Rich Tank, near Seringapatam, I understand is nearly thirty miles in circumference. I never saw that particular sheet of water; but many of the artificial lakes which I did examine measured six, eight, and ten miles round; and so vast are their numbers, that I remember counting considerably more than a hundred at one view from the top of Nundydroog; nor do I believe that the least of these could have been less than two or three miles in circuit.

Dr. Buchanan, in his journey through those countries, made by order of Lord Wellesley in 1800, shortly after the capture of Seringapatam, describes minutely the formation of these tanks, or Erays, as they are called in the Tamul language. The Saymbrumbacum Tank, not far from Madras, he says, is eight miles in length by three in width, and its contents are sufficient to supply with water the lands of thirty-two villages for eighteen months, supposing the usual rains to fail.

I have mentioned the manner in which a traveller in India may get a breakfast or dinner, bed, board, lodging, and troops of friends, when he happens to be near any military or civil station of the East India Company. But it will sometimes fall out that he cannot exactly nick the hour of breakfast or dinner, and then he must trust to his own wits and those of his bearers. Such, however, is the style of doing things in that fertile and populous country, that he must be a sorry traveller indeed who need ever experience any real difficulty on this score. I remember enjoying many of these campaigning kind of meals, almost as much as I did the premeditated luxuries of the Residencies, and other head stations of the interior—those true palaces of enjoyment, wherein we find all that plenty, good taste, a fine climate, and hospitality grown into a habit, can produce.

After a night's run, in a part of the country remote from an English station, and just as the day is beginning to dawn, the weary bearers look out for some village on the road. Instead of entering it, they make for the little grove or tope, which marks the position of the pagoda and tank always to be found near a native village. The palankeen is then set down under the most shady tree which is to be found near these cherished nooks. The traveller, if not awake before, is of course roused by the grating sound of the palankeen on the ground. He steps out in his slippers and sleeping trousers, and speedily plunging into the clear pool, proceeds, after a good swim, to make his toilet, with his shaving apparatus, glass, and basin, ranged on the top of his moveable house.

While he is thus engaged, one of the bearers on the opposite side of the palankeen takes out the blankets, sheets, and pillows, to give them a good

shaking, and after the interior has been well swept out, to arrange all things for day-travelling, by stowing away the night-furniture, hanging up the back cushion, and placing the foot-rest across. A couple of the men are likewise despatched to the village for milk and eggs; and if, by good fortune, there be a running stream near, they may bring a newly-caught fish. By the time these foragers have returned, a fire has been kindled, the little kettle set a-boiling, and the tea made. The eggs are then put on, the fish split and grilled on the embers, and the milk heated. Countless slices of toast are now prepared in rapid succession; and the nipping morning air having quickened the hungry edge of the traveller's appetite, he casts himself on the corner of his cloak, spread out for a table-cloth, and feasts away right joyously.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE DESSERA FESTIVAL AT MYSORE.

I THINK I have already mentioned, that little or no intercourse of a domestic nature takes place between the natives of India and the Europeans resident among them. The habits, in fact, of the two races of men are so dissimilar in all respects, that it is scarcely possible to conceive much agreeable or useful association. Some missionaries, indeed, by adopting the dress and language of the people, and by conforming to all their customs, have succeeded in domesticating themselves with the Hindoos; but the great points they aimed at were little, if at all, accomplished by such unwonted degradation—for it is a degradation—and, what is more to the purpose, has always been so considered by the natives. Curiosity may be gratified by such an experiment, but nothing more. The taste, even of a very coarse-minded European, must revolt at usages so foreign to his ideas of delicacy; and the influence which he might readily acquire by other means, more consistent with his own station, must vanish under this sort of condescension. The Abbé du Bois, and others, furnish us with enough, and more than enough, of the details of the private life of this singular people; and I can safely refer the curious in such matters to the Rev. W. Ward's book on the history, literature, mythology, manners, and customs of the Hindoos.

The usages of savage life in the cold regions of the world—for example, of the Esquimaux or the Cherokees—are essentially revolting in every shape, whether in reality or in description. Pretty nearly the same thing may be said of the domestic manners of the Asiatics, which are only less disagreeable to us, I suspect, from their being unaccompanied by the misery and filth which belong peculiarly to cold climates. The Hindoo, who is eternally bathing his person, cleaning his house, and scouring his brass kettles, casts over his shoulders his light and graceful wrapper, as white as snow; while your western savage would consider it a disgrace to wash his hands. The Esquimaux, after gorging himself with the raw flesh of a seal, draws the monster's skin round him, and goes to sleep in the mud. In this case, as there occurs nothing but what is disgusting, we dismiss the subject as speedily as we can, without a wish to see or hear more of it. In truth, though these savages be human in form and speech, they seem so close to the brute creation, that any sympathy with them is out of the question.

It is so far different with the Orientals, whose civilisation, in some respects, is considerable. Our wonder, indeed, is often excited by the most anomalous mixture of pure barbarisms with refinements of a high order. The institution of castes, and the rigorous ceremonial discipline which it imposes, appear fatal to any improvement in manners, by rigidly defining the course of every action. The utter extravagance, also, and measureless absurdity of their superstitions, which pervade every thought, word, and deed of their lives, seem effectually to place a bar against amelioration in that quarter. What time and change of political circumstances may bring about, it is difficult, if not impossible, to say.

The public festivals, and other out-of-door habits of the Hindoos, however, do certainly include some points of transient interest. But they are so entirely without taste or fancy, that the attention of a European becomes fatigued, as soon as his mere curiosity is satisfied. I remember experiencing this process in the interior of the South of India on two different occasions, between which an interval of more than a year elapsed. My head-quarters, in both cases, was the British resident's house, or residency, at Mysore, a town about ten miles from Seringapatam. The country of Mysore, after we had conquered it from Tippoo, was restored by us, as I have already mentioned, to the original native dynasty of the Hindoos. As a measure of precaution, however, we retained the island of Seringapatam, in the river Cauvery, garrisoned it, and kept the British flag flying on the forts. It was stipulated, also, that a subsidiary force, consisting of several thousand men, partly European and partly native, but all officered by English, and under the command of a general officer, should be maintained by the Company, in the heart of the country. The object of this subsidiary force (so called from a subsidy being paid by the native power to maintain it) was to prevent invasions from abroad, and also to render it unnecessary for the Hindoo goverment to keep an army in the field. The civil administration, however, of the country, the collection of the revenue, the execution of the laws, the appointment to office—in short, every detail of government, was left in the hands of the native rulers. In order to secure compliance with the various stipulations of the treaty, re-establishing the Hindoo dynasty on the throne of Mysore, a British resident was appointed to live at or near the court, to watch what was going on, and, in case of need, to interfere by remonstrance, or, in extreme cases, by force.

This was certainly not independence, nor was it intended to be so. It was essential to our political existence in India, that we should retain a preponderating influence in Mysore, and other countries similarly circumstanced; but the same course of measures which secured our authority, afforded peace, security, and, it was hoped, contentment to the great mass of the nation. That some of the chiefs should sigh for more uncontrolled authority, according to the despotic customs of the East, is

not to be wondered at, nor ought it to be disregarded; on the contrary, it requires the greatest delicacy of treatment on our part to keep them in tolerable good humour. Sir John Malcolm well remarks on this subject, that "while we are supported by the good opinion of the lower and middling classes, to whom our government is indulgent, our power has received the rudest shocks, from an impression that our system of rule is at variance with the permanence of rank, authority, and distinction in any native of India. This belief," he adds, "which is not without foundation, is general to every class, and its action leaves but a feverish existence to all who enjoy station and high name. The feeling which their condition excites, exposes those who have left to them any portion of power and independence, to the arts of the discontented, the turbulent, and the ambitious. This is a danger to our power which must increase in the ratio of its extent, unless we counteract its operation by a commensurate improvement of our administration."—*Central India*, Appendix, No. XVIII. p. 434.

As the British resident, of course, wished to keep on the best terms, personally, with the native ruler near whose court he was stationed, he introduced, on all occasions of ceremony, such private friends as might chance to be living with him; and the Rajah, on his part, was no less careful to mark, by his reception of such guests, the high consideration in which he held the officer appointed to watch him. Both parties might, at heart, be hating one another like cat and dog; but none of this came to the surface, for your Asiatic, like a Spaniard, knows well how to be courteous under almost every trial of temper.

I had the good fortune to arrive at Mysore during the Dessera feast, a celebrated Hindoo festival, in honour of Shiva, and known to the natives by the name of "Nuwwee Ratree," or nine nights—though the word Dessera means "tenth." I lost the first four days, but I saw more than enough in the last five to satisfy me. The Rajah's palace, in the fort of Mysore, lay at the distance of half a mile from the British residency, from which the resident and his suite set out generally about four o'clock in the afternoon. It was not considered etiquette to move till we had been summoned by a message from the Rajah, stating that he was ready to receive us. As soon as the order to march was given, off we scampered to the door; and while some of us flung ourselves into the palankeens, others mounted their horses, and the whole moved along as fast as the crowd would permit. The bearers set off at a full run, shouting and screaming as usual, and preceded by about fifty men carrying spears in their hands fourteen feet long. At the head of the procession, a fellow, blessed with powerful lungs, sounded a long slightly curved sort of trumpet, called a colleroy horn, to announce the resident's approach. The blast sent forth by this wild instrument rung far over the plain with a note such as I never heard before, rising towards its close into a pitch of shrillness which pierced the head from ear to ear. As we rushed along towards the gate of the fort, the palankeens, to the number of a dozen or twenty, frequently came into smart collision with one another. As the road contracted, there remained only room for three abreast; but, as all seemed equally anxious to get in first, the mêlée became trying enough for those who possessed weak nerves. Besides our own party and immediate attendants, there pranced along the resident's body-guard of troops, and many hundreds of native horsemen—all struggling for admission, and casting up clouds of dust as high as the topmost pinnacle of the adjacent pagoda—every man shouting, screaming, and jostling, apparently trying who should make most noise, and occasion most disorder.

Within the gate, a little more room was found; and the apprehension of being upset and trodden under foot diminished for a time; but the row and risk proved even worse as we entered the quadrangular court of the palace, in the centre of which the ring for wild-beast baiting was fixed. On the outside of the ropes such a dense mass of the multitude were jammed, that the poor sepoy guards stationed there to keep a lane clear for us to pass, could with great difficulty obtain an opening barely large enough for two of the party. Into this narrow strait, however, four or five palankeens used to make a determined rush together; and, on one occasion, such was the momentum of their charge, that both the protecting lines of soldiers were toppled down exactly in the fashion of the child's play at cards, known by the title of Jack sent for Mustard. The palankeens were instantly closed upon by the crowd, like the hosts of Pharaoh when the Red Sea collapsed upon them: but, in spite of the chance of being squeezed to death, it was impossible for us not to laugh. I can remember to this minute the shout which a merry countryman of mine set up—o'er-topping all but the skirl, as he called it, of the colleroy horn.

On reaching the inner side of the palace square, we rolled out of our palankeens dusted over like millers, at the bottom of the stairs, where the resident was received by the prime minister or dewan, Ram Row by name, and another high officer of state, whose name and station I forget. It appeared to be the practice first to make a salam to these functionaries, and then to shake hands with them—ceremonies, doubtless, typical of the mixed nature of a subsidiary government—half native, half English. As soon as we had all been received, the resident and the dewan—unquestionably the two most important men of the country, and the real managers of all public affairs—moved on, while we followed up stairs according to our rank and consequence, such as it was. At the top, we entered a long gallery, or verandah, open towards the court. A row of pillars in front sustained a low roof, richly gilt, and gaudily painted with flowers; to match which, a brilliant set of cotton carpets had been spread under foot—so gay, indeed, that one felt it almost a shame to tread upon them.

In the middle of the front row sat his highness the Maha Rajah, Kistna Rajee Oudaveer, on a throne formed exclusively of gold, silver, and ivory. This gorgeous seat was shaded by a canopy of similar materials, supported by four polished steel pillars, and festooned round its edge with such strings of such pearls as might have drawn sighs from a dozen grand-duchesses. On the top of all sat a bird, composed, as it seemed to our dazzled view, entirely of precious stones, the eyes sparkling to the life, being two diamonds of a brilliancy far surpassing all the rest.

It was more satisfactory than I can well describe, to behold the Rajah thus rigged out in the very garb which youthful imaginations bestow upon all monarchs, but in which, to the mortification of many a youth and many a maid, few monarchs actually exhibit themselves. Except, indeed, in the shop of Messrs. Rundell and Bridge, so many jewels are rarely to be seen collected in one space; at least, I never but once beheld such a load of riches on the person of any individual. In the front part of his Hindoo highness's turban blazed a battery of diamonds, twice as large as the splendid ornament which most of the present generation may remember to have seen on the forehead of that great Ranee, or queen of song, Catalani, valued at ten thousand guineas. From the right side of the Rajah's turban rose a curved pedestal of gold, from the projecting part of which hung down a cluster of enormous pearls, on different strings, forming a bunch larger than one hand could grasp. This weight of wealth gave his majesty a slight "list to starboard," but, as one of our party remarked, a man might be content to go with a crick in his neck for the remainder of his life, in consideration of the honour and glory of such ballast. Our royal host, however, was also pretty well weighted below, for over his neck and shoulders he had cast about a dozen chaplets of precious stones, some of them reaching to his middle, and others clasping his throat. From each ear was suspended a thick ring of virgin gold fully three inches in diameter, carrying a huge ruby, sparkling above all the other jewels which loaded his person. To his left arm, from the wrist to the elbow, there appeared to be fitted a broad gold plate, like a piece of armour; but what its purpose might be we knew not. On each day of the festival, the Rajah's turban and his robes were different: one day his tunic consisted of a white ground, with small red spots; another day it was entirely red; and on a third, the whole consisted of gold cloth. But the jewels seemed to be the same on each day, and thence our inference was, that the whole stock of "barbaric pearl and gold" belonging to the crown of Mysore was produced on these occasions.

On entering the gallery, we marched up in a row to the foot of the musnud or throne, salaming all the way; and, after shaking hands with his highness and salaming again, we backed away stern foremost, exactly as in European courts, to the seats assigned for us in the first row. The space behind us, between our chairs and the wall, was occupied by the sovereign's family and officers. Close to the Rajah, on the right hand, sat the dewan, the British resident on his left, and then various near relatives and official folks—not to mention two attendants of high rank, whose sole business appeared to consist in popping into his highness's mouth, from time to time, the proper portion of betel-nut!

I forget exactly at what stage of the interview an officer of the household, despatched by the Rajah, came along the line and cast over our necks a chaplet of white flowers, each person, of course, rising and salaming towards the throne as this high honour was conferred upon him. Next followed an attendant bearing a silver dish, on which were laid some bits of betel-nut, with a few leaves, and the proper proportion of lime to chew with them. Some of the party did actually go through this ceremony—on the principle, I suppose, of Captain Cook, who ate and drank everything. I have sometimes, by the way, thought, in reading the accounts of our great voyager, that he must have been blessed with the stomach of an ostrich, to whom spike-nails are no harder of digestion than asparagus, as is said and believed on board ship! Close behind the betel-nut bearer, came an attendant with a tray of small nosegays, followed by a boy with a bottle of highly perfumed oil, one drop of which he bestowed on each bunch of flowers, thus literally "adding a perfume to the violet."

Last of all came a most important personage, whose office every one could appreciate. The business of this welcome messenger consisted in throwing a pair of the finest cachemere shawls over each of our shoulders! Never shall I forget the effect which this present produced on my mind and feelings. Up to that moment I had been in the habit of thinking as ill as possible of the Rajah of Mysore; and, with the ready indiscretion of youth, and all the confidence of recently acquired and partial knowledge, had never failed to state in company, without any measure in the terms, that the government of his highness Sree Kistna was most oppressive. But ever since feeling the delicate pressure of these beautiful shawls, I have been unable to bring myself to say one word against the giver.

The East India Company very judiciously take care that none of their servants shall be exposed to such temptations; for every present whatsoever, given to any officer, civil or military, in their employ, must immediately afterwards be handed over to a person appointed to receive it; an exact equivalent being, as a matter of course, presently returned, in some shape or other, to the treasury of the rajah, sultan, or other native authority who gave the present. As I was not within reach of this provoking ordinance, I was allowed to keep my pair of shawls, and, though rather the worse for twenty years' wear, they still figure on the necks of some fair friends of mine at home.

Many a time have I witnessed the intense mortification of the wives of the East India Company's servants, on their being obliged to relinquish the beautiful presents which they and their husbands brought home from the durbar. I remember once seeing, or thinking that I saw, a tear or two drop and mingle with a handful of pearls which a lady was in the act of returning, according to regulation.

"Why!" said I to her, "what does it matter? What could you do with the jewels here? You have no society amongst whom you could desire to wear such valuable ornaments?"

"No," she replied, "that is very true; but my two poor girls at home, whom I have not seen for these three long, long years, would look so becoming in them!" And then the mother's tears flowed fast and in earnest, as she thought of her children, between whom and her rolled ten thousand miles of sea!

The Rajah having ordered the sports to commence, we turned our eyes to the area below with much curiosity, to see what should first happen. In the middle of the great square, an enclosure

or ring, about thirty or forty yards across, had been formed by means of a double line of posts, ten feet apart and ten feet high, over which was cast a strong netting, forming a secure wall of ropes, but so loose that it hung in folds to the ground. The populace filled the rest of the square, along with the guards, some mounted, some on foot, and I am afraid to say how many elephants there might be—twenty or thirty, at the least, together with numerous bodies of policemen bearing long poles with flags at the end. These, I presume, were intended for show; but another set carried immense long whips, with which the sovereign people were kept from pressing in too great numbers upon the ropes. A dozen native bands of music, consisting of sharp-sounding drums, and a number of shrill pipes, resembling in squeak that of our penny trumpets, only most painfully louder, and all playing at once, grievously disturbed us during the whole exhibition.

On one side of the space within the ring two beautiful leopards stood chained to separate posts. As these animals had been caught in the jungle the day before, nothing could be more sleek and glossy than their coats. Near these noble beasts, as if in contrast, were turned in, quite loose, two jackasses, each of which drew behind him, tied to his tail, a globular empty leathern bottle, called, I think, a dabbah, about as large as a man could grasp in his arms. Into these machines a handful of gravel or dried peas had been inserted, to make a noise as the poor donkeys moved about. On the other side of the arena two painted wooden figures of men were placed in a leaning posture against stakes fastened in the ground.

Exactly opposite to the Rajah, at the further side of the ring, a huge cage, composed of strong wooden bars, had been wheeled close to the ropes. A door on that side of the cage which faced us being now drawn up, we discovered a large royal tiger sitting in the attitude of the sphinx, apparently all ready for a spring. He looked exceedingly fierce, and no wonder, for the poor wretch had been kept with little or no food ever since his capture in a pitfall in one of the great teak forests of the Malabar Ghauts upwards of two days before. The royal animal seemed very ill disposed to afford sport to folks who had treated him so uncourteously, for not an inch would he budge even when the netting was drawn up, and a clear course opened for him into the ring. Perhaps he felt alarmed at the dreadful hullabaloo of so many thousands of people bawling out, drums beating, and horns sounding, rows of elephants tossing up their trunks, and horses snorting and prancing all round. Possibly, too, he might not have felt much tempted by the dainty company of the jackasses with their bottles of peas. At all events, no poking of sticks or thumping on the cage could make him start tack or sheet, till his hind-quarters were blown up by a handful of squibs and crackers cast into his den.

The instant the explosion took place, the tiger gave a tremendous roar, and sprung forwards with great violence into the circle, where he stopped suddenly, and then glared his eyes round and round with a most suspicious scowl. After surveying the ground for a few seconds, he turned tail, and, in a most cowardly fashion, ran back; but observing the door of his den closed, he swerved on one side, and leaped with prodigious violence against the ropes. Had the cords not been left so loose that his force became expended before they were drawn tight, I verily believe he might have broken through the meshes, or pulled down some of the posts. Instead of this he merely got entangled with the lines, and losing all his patience, if he ever possessed any, he raged and roared, lashing his tail about in the most furious style till he got free. Then turning round, he shot across the area like a Congreve rocket, and after making an immense cat-like spring, pounced upon one of the mock figures of men, the head of which he twisted off in an instant. During this proceeding he gave utterance to a fierce growl, or murmur of satisfaction, enough to make one's blood run cold. As soon as he detected the trick, he first flung the head violently from him, and tore the figure all to pieces with his claws, then made another attempt to break through the enclosure, but with no better success than at first.

I really thought at one time he would have effected his escape, by climbing over at the place where his cage stood. Both his fore paws were actually on the roof, and, with no great struggle, he might have gained the top, from whence his leap into the midst of the crowd must have produced a pretty tolerable sensation, I guess! Fortunately, a courageous little boy, about twelve years old, who had perched himself on the cage to see the fun, stood quite firm when all his older companions scattered to the right and left, in terror of the tiger's open jaws close to them. This bold young fellow held in his hand a short stout club, and the instant the tiger showed himself above the ropes, he lent him such a sound rap on the nose, that the animal fell back again into the enclosure, heels over head, with a sort of inverted somerset. While a shout of applause rung over the whole space, an old Mahometan soldier, an officer of the extinct dynasty, remarked to us in a whisper, that this exploit was just the sort of thing which his former master, Hyder Ali, might have been expected to do in his youth.

The baffled tiger now attacked the other figure of a man, and wrenched off his head as he had done that of the other; but instead of getting into a passion, as he had done on the first occasion, when he discovered the cheat, he stood perfectly still, with his tail on the ground, his head drooped and turned away from the figure, as if he felt ashamed of having been twice deceived. In this attitude he remained several minutes, with his eyes half-closed, slightly moving his head from side to side; after which he deliberately laid himself down. A dozen yelping dogs were now turned in, some of which prudently contented themselves with taking a distant look at the royal beast. Not one of them approached him except an English greyhound, and even he was not such a fool as to press matters too far, but merely barked and snarled; once or twice he came so close to the tiger's nose that we wondered the monster had not laid his paw upon him, and crushed him at a blow. Meanwhile, the rest of the dogs, in a body, attacked one of the chained-up leopards—a most unfair contest; but as he had the good fortune to catch one of them on the hip, he gave such evidence of his capacity, that the barkers, leaving the nobler game, one and all scampered off in

chase of the donkeys. These poor beasts, terrified by the sound of the bottles at their tails, and worried by the dogs, were soon dragged to the ground, after which a distant action was recommenced against the leopards, with no results, as military men express it.

By this time, probably the Rajah, and certainly his company, were pretty well tired of so much nonsense; and his highness, turning to one of his courtiers, desired him to go down to the court with a bow and arrow which was handed to him. The officer descended accordingly, and having passed round to that side of the ring where the tiger lay, very deliberately shot an arrow at the unoffending animal. He immediately sprang at the ropes; but upon receiving another arrow in his breast, the poor creature fell back, and stood looking reproachfully at his opponent. This gave the unconcerned courtier time to draw a third arrow from his quiver, and so on, till the wretched beast was literally bristled all over like a porcupine; yet, to our great surprise, he still kept his feet. As the arrows pierced his side, he merely turned round his head, and broke them off with his mouth, leaving the barb far within. We observed one arrow pass clean through his body from side to side, and could not but remember the old song of Chevy Chase, where the grey goose-quill, a cloth yard long, is wet with the heart's blood of a warrior. As nothing could be more disagreeable than this method of putting so noble an animal to death, some of us sent up a petition to the Rajah, that one of the party might be allowed to go down for the purpose of despatching him *à-l'anglaise*. This favour was readily granted; and it was curious to observe how instantaneous death followed the passage of a single musket-ball, though eight or ten arrows had already gone through and through him without producing any visible effect.

Persons who have only seen those beasts which are called (ironically, I suppose,) wild, though the tamest and most docile of God's creatures, can form but an imperfect idea of the beauty of the skin and the nobleness of the air of those truly wild inhabitants of the tropical forests, thus inhumanly "butchered to make an Indian holiday." We had a good opportunity of studying the habits of the tiger at the British residency hard by, where one of the most remarkable specimens of his tribe was kept in the open air. He had been brought as a cub from the jungle a year or two before, and being placed in a cage as large as an ordinary English parlour, in the centre of the stable-yard, had plenty of room to leap about and enjoy the high feeding in which he was indulged. He devoured regularly one sheep per day, with any other extra bits of meat that happened to be disposable. A sheep in India is rather smaller—say ten per cent.—less than our Welsh mutton; so this was no great meat for a tiger four feet high. The young hands at the residency used to plague him occasionally, till he became infuriated, and dashed with all his force against the bars, roaring so loud that the horses in the surrounding stables trembled and neighed in great alarm. Indeed, it was very difficult, even for persons who were fully satisfied of the strength of the cage, to stand near it with unmoved nerves. He would soon have made famous mince-meat of half-a-dozen of us, could he but have caught the door open for a moment.

But what annoyed him far more than our poking him up with a stick, or tantalising him with shins of beef or legs of mutton, was introducing a mouse into his cage. No fine lady ever exhibited more terror at the sight of a spider than this magnificent royal tiger betrayed on seeing a mouse. Our mischievous plan was to tie the little animal by a string to the end of a long pole, and thrust it close to the tiger's nose. The moment he saw it, he leaped to the opposite side; and when the mouse was made to run near him, he jammed himself into a corner, and stood trembling and roaring in such an ecstacy of fear that we were always obliged to desist from sheer pity to the poor brute. Sometimes we insisted on his passing over the spot where the unconscious little mouse ran backwards and forwards. For a long time, however, we could not get him to move, till at length, I believe by the help of a squib, we obliged him to start; but instead of pacing leisurely across his den, or making a détour to avoid the object of his alarm, he generally took a kind of flying leap, so high as nearly to bring his back in contact with the roof of his cage!

I heard afterwards, with much regret, that this noblest of tigers had been put to death. One day, a drunken useless fellow of the Soodra caste, the lowest rank amongst the Hindoos, happened to be passing through the court-yard, and not being able to steer very straight, he ran foul of the cage. In the stupidity of his intoxication, he allowed one of his arms to pass between the bars, upon which the tiger, naturally supposing this was an invitation to help himself, snapped off the man's arm in a moment, and before assistance could arrive the man bled to death. The British resident, very properly considering that the feelings of the natives would be outraged if, after such an accident, the animal were permitted to live, ordered him to be shot.

We were promised a grand day's sport one afternoon, when a buffalo and a tiger were to be pitted against each other. The buffalo entered the ring composedly enough; but after looking about him, turned to one side, and rather pettishly, as if he had felt a little bilious, overturned a vessel of water, placed there expressly for his use. The tiger refused for a long time to make his appearance, and it was not till his den was filled with smoke and fire that he sprang out. The buffalo charged his enemy in a moment, and by one furious push capsised him right over. To our great disappointment, the tiger pocketed this insult in the shabbiest manner imaginable, and passing on, leaped furiously at the ropes, with which his feet became entangled, so that the buffalo was enabled to punish his antagonist about the rump most ingloriously. When at length the tiger got loose, he slunk off to a distant part of the area, lay down, and pretended to be dead. The boys, however, soon put him up again, and tried to bring him to the scratch with squibs and crackers; and a couple of dozen dogs being introduced at the same moment, they all set at him, but only one ventured to take any liberty with the enraged animal. This bold dog actually caught the tiger by the tail, but a slight pat of the mighty monster's paw crushed the yelping cur as flat as

a board. The buffalo, who really appeared anxious to have a fair stand-up fight, now drove the dogs off, and repeatedly poked the tiger with his nose, and even turned him half over several times with his horns.

As the gentleman showed no pluck, the Rajah requested one of us to step down to give him the coup-de-grâce. I accordingly loaded a musket which was placed in my hands, but on reaching the area I felt rather unwilling to fire, as I just heard a story of a gentleman who, the year before, in firing at one of the animals in the ring by the Rajah's directions, not only shot the animal, but also killed an old woman who stood on the other side of the ring, the ball having continued its course after piercing the tiger's head. On my expressing a wish to try, in the first place, the effect of cold iron upon his tough hide, a very sharp-pointed spear was given me, and I tried with my utmost force to pass it through his hide, but in vain. He rose, however, on being pricked by the steel, and by making a violent effort to clutch my hand, thrust his head fairly through one of the meshes of the net, to my no small dismay. Either the ropes were not very strong, or the seizings weak, for they began to break, and in the next minute, as it appeared to me, the infuriated monster might have forced his whole body through. In this emergency I quite forgot all about humanity and old women, and catching up the musket, placed the muzzle of the piece at the tiger's head, and blew his brains out in a moment.

A more manly, though not a pleasing kind of sport succeeded, in which the Jetties, or native athletæ, exhibited before us. Mysore is the only part of India, as far as I know, in which these Oriental prize-fighters are still kept up. The Jetties, whose institution is said to be of very ancient origin, constitute in Mysore a distinct caste of persons, trained from their infancy daily in the most laborious exercises, or what we should call gymnastics, but far more varied and extraordinary than any I ever saw in Europe. Whether they spring from a peculiarly handsome stock, or whether it be that the nature of their unremitted exercises develops the beautiful points of the human form, I know not; but certainly nothing except the statues of antiquity go beyond them in symmetry. The beau-idéal, if I understand the term correctly, consists in the appropriation and just disposition of the most characteristic forms of each department, selected, not from one or two individual specimens, but from the whole class. Judged by such a severe test, every one of these Jetties would, of course, be found wanting in many respects. But I cannot doubt, on the other hand, that a sculptor or painter in search of materials to fill up, by observation of actual nature, his own conceptions of ideal excellence, would consider the exercising-room of these singular people a capital studio. At all events, their attitudes, and even some parts of their limbs, recalled to me so strongly the surpassing wonders of the Elgin Marbles, that I went very often to their quarters to see them rehearse.

The Jetties intended for the real combat are brought forward, two at a time, wearing no other dress than a pair of light orange-coloured drawers, extending half way down the thigh. The right hand of each is furnished with a weapon which may be called a cæstus; for though it is somewhat different, I believe, from the Roman instrument of that time, its object appears pretty nearly similar. Colonel Wilks, in his History of Mysore, says it is composed of buffalo horn fitted to the hand, and pointed with four knobs resembling very sharp knuckles, and corresponding to their situation, with a fifth of greater prominence at the end nearest the little finger, and at right angles with the other four. This instrument, if properly placed, would, he conceives, enable a man of ordinary strength to cleave open the head of his adversary at a blow; but the fingers being introduced through the weapon, it is fastened across them at an equal distance between the first and second lower joints, in a situation which does not admit of attempting a severe blow without the risk of dislocating the first joints of all the fingers.

The set-to or battle consists of a mixture of wrestling and boxing, but the head is the only object allowed by the rules of the ring in India to be aimed at. The Jetties are led into the arena and placed in front of the Rajah, by the two masters of the fight, always old stagers, who have fought in their day. The right hands of the two combatants being then held up by the masters, to show that all is fair, the Rajah nods his approbation, and this is considered a signal to commence. The Jetties may either strike at arm's length, or close and grapple, or, if they can, they may throw each other down—everything, in short, is considered fair, except striking with the cæstus lower than the head. The guards for defence, I have heard persons skilled in boxing say, are all of them extremely good and scientific. These refinements, like the niceties of English boxing and French fencing, are, I need scarcely confess, quite unintelligible to ignorant eyes. However this be, there is no mistaking the nature of a successful blow, though it often baffles the quickest observation to discover how it was given. Every such cut lays the skin open, rattles smartly on the skull, and sends down a stream of blood from top to toe of the wounded man. This is all very disagreeable, but we were assured never dangerous. The wrestling part of these contests was really admirable, and being unmixed with anything painful, interested us much more than the savage cutting and maiming alluded to. Sometimes the combatants continued for several minutes prancing round a common centre, in attitudes very like those of our boxers, facing one another, each eyeing his antagonist with the utmost intentness, and watching for a favourable opportunity to close with him. During these movements, which frequently recalled to my mind the figures in the Spanish bolero, the fingers of the left hand are kept in perpetual motion, and that arm constantly waved about in the most graceful way possible, the purpose of each fighter being to catch the eye of the other, and so to draw away his attention from the meditated point of attack. The whole muscles of their bodies, at this period of the fight, appeared to be made of highly elastic springs; for as their feet touched the ground, their bodies rose again into the air, as if they had become actually buoyant.

Suddenly one of the parties, seizing his moment, rushes in, makes his blow, and having cut a gash

into the other's head so deep as to show for an instant, by a bright white line, that the skull is laid bare, he grapples his antagonist by the shoulders, or clasps him round the body, or even seizes him by the leg, and tries to throw him over. This is by far the most interesting part of the battle. The elasticity of the muscles already alluded to seems now quite gone, for every fibre appears to have become as rigid as a bar of steel. The violent exertion of the limbs swells out the muscles between the joints into firm knobs almost as hard as the buffalo's horn of the cæstus. For a long time the centre of gravity of the two bodies keeps within the well-marked base carved deeply in the sand by their feet during the struggle; but at length, down they go together with a most formidable crash. It is not always, I took notice, that the wrestler who is undermost comes worst off; for it frequently happens, that the upper one is obliged to weaken his guard in order to keep the other down, and thus, although he has the superiority in position, he gets many a severe pegging from the armed knuckles of his prostrate antagonist. In this manner they lie rolling about in the sand for a long while, struggling to regain their feet, and occasionally giving each other such blows on the head that they become dreadfully disfigured.

After battling in this way for some time, without any decided advantage on either side, they cast up many petitioning looks to the Rajah, who at length makes a signal for them to desist. The victor, if there happens to be an obvious superiority, generally goes off the ground in half-a-dozen somersets, to show his undiminished vigour, as our champions in the prize-ring cast up their hats when they have won, and say they are ready for a fresh fight. Meanwhile the loser puts on a pathetic or wistful look; and first bending towards the Rajah, makes a low salam towards the lattices, behind which the ladies of the court are seated, so as to view the sport, while they themselves keep out of sight of the profane world. Presents, consisting of gilt or silver armlets, turbans, webs of cloth, and so on, are then thrown down from the throne to the Jetties, upon which the bleeding combatants again prostrate themselves in the dust before the Rajah, and make similar obeisances on both sides of the court to the invisible ladies above.

Immediately after these rather painful exhibitions, we were entertained with stilt-dancing by a set of men the soles of whose feet were raised, on slender poles, more than seven feet from the ground. They stalked about amongst the crowd, and in this elevated position went through the whole series of what are called the Persian exercises. One strong fellow, thus elevated, presented himself before the Rajah with a couple of full-sized ploughs on his shoulders, a feat which called forth much admiration. We had then a fight between two buffaloes, which ran their heads against each other with a crash that one could fancy shook the palace to its very foundation; indeed, the only wonder was how both animals did not fall down dead with their skulls fractured. But there appears to be a wonderful degree of thickness or hardness in this part of the animal structure both in beast and in man, for just after these buffaloes had given evidence of the hardness of their heads, a dozen persons came forward, and placed themselves before a large pile of cocoa-nuts stripped of their outer husks. These being cast successively high into the air, were caught in their descent by these hard-pated fellows, who stood erect, and received the cocoa-nuts, I presume, on their "bumps of resistiveness." In every case the shell was literally dashed to pieces, and the milk scattered in showers over the crowd. Such a cracking of heads I never heard, except once at a fair in Ireland. Thus, our careful mother, Dame Nature, it should seem, has taken good care to defend the brain, though it may perhaps be surmised, that folks who furnish such hazardous evidence of the thickness of their skulls, have no great stock of brains to protect.

The prettiest game, to our taste, during the whole of this long and rather wearisome festival, was one which might be imitated with some effect by the figurantes of our own Opera. From a ring in the middle of a pole stretched horizontally over the centre of the area, were suspended eight differently coloured silk strings, the ends of which were held in the hands of as many little boys. Upon a signal being given, and music striking up, these eight young persons commenced a dance, the purpose of which was to plait up the separate cords into one rope. After working about a couple of feet of this line, the music changed, and the little weavers, inverting the order of their dance, undid the silken strands of their party-coloured rope, and stood ready to lay them up again, according to the same or any other pattern which might be ordered by his highness the Maha Rajah of Mysore.

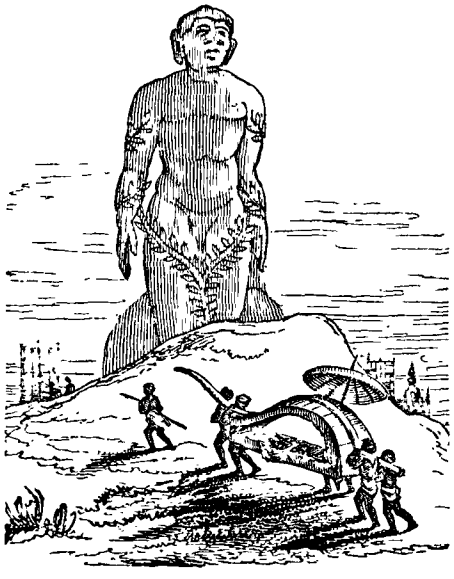
CHAPTER XVII.

GRANITE MOUNTAIN CUT INTO A STATUE—BAMBOO FOREST—RAJAH OF COORG.

During my stay in Mysore, I made an excursion thirty miles north of Seringapatam, to examine a huge statue of solid granite, nearly seventy feet in height, at a place with a name almost as long as the statue itself—Shrivanabalagol. It is wonderful how indifferent most people, living on any given spot of the earth's surface, become to the sights in their immediate neighbourhood; for when I asked at the Mysore residency for information about this extraordinary colossal statue, which lies within one night's journey, I found the greater number of the party had never seen it; nor could I prevail on any person to accompany me on the expedition. I set out, accordingly, alone, about sunset, went to bed in my palankeen, and never awoke till the bearers set me down, next morning, on the pavement of a choultry near the spot. As I could see nothing of the statue, however, for an intervening grove of trees, I ran to the corner of the wood, where I suddenly obtained a view of this astonishing work of art, standing up boldly against the sky, and showing itself above a low range of intermediate hills.

I certainly never saw any work of man, before or since, which gave me so complete an idea of a giant, as this extraordinary statue. It has sometimes been described as an image of Boodh; but, I understand that it represents Gomuta Raya, a

celebrated saint of the Jains—a sect of Hindoos, differing in some important respects from the Brahminical, and also from the Boodhist varieties of Oriental superstition.



I possessed no exact means of measuring its height; but the authorities I have consulted on this point vary between sixty-seven feet and seventy feet three inches, which is the height stated by Dr. Buchanan; and, from such estimates as I could make, I am sure it cannot be much less. It is admirably placed for effect, as it stands on the summit of a conical granite hill about two hundred feet high, which serves for a pedestal. The statue still constitutes a part of the solid rock, which originally may have been three hundred feet high, the stone which formed the upper part of the mountain having been carved away, until nothing but the figure remained. The original shape of the hill cannot, indeed, be correctly inferred from anything we now see, but it probably formed a steep cone, or peak, of which the bold sculptor has taken such magnificent advantage.

I have often, when travelling since in foreign countries, been struck with natural forms and positions, which, by the hands of a man of genius, might easily be turned to account for the construction of similar colossal figures, calculated, under certain circumstances, to produce a much greater effect, at incalculably less cost, than the ordinary methods of casting and carving can accomplish. I was therefore much rejoiced to hear a great modern sculptor declare, that he had long entertained a project of constructing such a statue in this country. On my showing him the sketches I had made of the gigantic figure in Mysore, and describing it as minutely as I could, he remarked to himself, "I'll beat this big Indian man yet!"

In looking at Buchanan's account of Mysore for a description of the statue at Shrivanabalagol, I found the following remark:—"Sir Arthur Wellesley visited the place lately;" and on inquiring amongst the officers who had belonged to the army which marched from Seringapatam to the Mahratta country, some time after the fall of Tippoo, I learned that the General had actually gone upwards of thirty miles out of his way to see the statue, and then galloped back to rejoin the troops, whose march was never interrupted.

I had also the curiosity lately to ask the Duke of Wellington himself, whether this account was correct, and what he thought of the statue. He said it was quite true; and added, that he had never seen anything so magnificent in its way. It will therefore be interesting enough if Sir Francis Chantrey, with such an example before him as the Indian statue, and such a subject at hand, shall make good his boast of beating the Oriental sculptor.

During my stay at the residency of Mysore, I took many trips to Seringapatam, for I never felt tired of wandering amongst the fortifications and other forts so celebrated in our Eastern history. I got hold of an intelligent old corporal, a pensioner, who had actually entered the breach as one of the storming party when the place was taken in 1799. I easily induced him to go regularly through the whole siege, Uncle Toby fashion, from the beginning to the end—from the first hour the ground was broken to the capture of the city and the discovery of Tippoo's body. The trenches and breaching-batteries, of which scarcely any traces now exist, had been formed on the right bank of the river, not far below the spot where the river divides itself into two streams, which, after running apart for about three miles, again unite, and thus form a loop, within which stands the island of Seringapatam. On the upper end of this island, which is sharp like a spear-head, is erected the fortress, by no means in a good situation, as I understand from military men, nor well constructed in itself. That, however, signifies little, as it is now dismantled. The breach had been built up; but although fourteen years had elapsed since the siege, the difference in colour of the modern masonry rendered the spot quite distinct. We could even count numerous shot-marks and shot-holes on the different faces of the bastion adjacent to the breach, which was made in the curtain of the work. The river happened to be so low, that Corporal Trim and I managed, at the expense of a pretty good wetting, to follow the exact line of the storming party across the bed of the stream, and over the *fausse braye* wall. We were obliged to make a little circumbendibus to enter the works, for we carried no scaling-ladders with us.

The readers of the history of the campaign, which terminated so gloriously, will remember that a huge ditch was found within the ramparts by the astonished storming party; and, had it not been for a few planks inadvertently left by the troops of Tippoo, they might never have been able to cross, and the besiegers have been repulsed. As the waters rose in the river to seventeen feet in depth, within a day or two afterwards, the fort might then have long withstood its assailants, had the moment of attack been deferred.

On these visits to Seringapatam, I slept in one of Tippoo Sultan's palaces, called the Dowlut Baug, or garden of riches; but I paid dearly for my temerity. Indeed, I believe that island is nearly

the most unhealthy spot in the East Indies. What is curious, however, I felt none of the evil effects of the malaria poison as long as I remained on the high level of the Mysore country; but within a few days after reaching the sea-coast of Malabar was seized with what is called the jungle fever, of which I feel the consequences to this hour. The Duke of Wellington (then Colonel Wellesley), when governor of Seringapatam, lived in the same palace, which he rendered more commodious than it had ever been in the days of Tippoo Sultan, or even of his father Hyder Ali. He filled it with European furniture, and made it less unhealthy by placing glass sashes in all the windows, by which some portion of the noxious air of the night could be kept out.

A characteristic touch of the same hand was pointed out to me in the Dowlut Baug. On the walls of the verandah, on that side of the palace which is most conspicuous, there had been represented, with much minuteness of detail, but with a total absence of perspective, the native version of Colonel Baillie's defeat—a disaster which, as I have already mentioned, occurred some twenty years before (1780), under the reign of Hyder. As the success, upon that occasion, was undoubtedly on the side of the Mahometans, there could be nothing fairer, in the way of nationality, than blazoning the victory on the walls of the palace. By the same right of conquest, the new governor of the island might undoubtedly have ordered a brush to be passed over the original painting, and have substituted in its stead the storming party in the breach where Tippoo fell. The English warrior's taste, however, was of a different description. He sent for the best native artists in Seringapatam, and made them carefully restore the original work, which had been much destroyed, desiring them to omit no item which the fallen dynasty had sanctioned. In consequence of this fresh painting, I saw, so late as 1813, the whole disastrous story displayed to public view, in the glaring colours in which Hyder had originally delighted to exhibit the prowess of his arms.

In the same manly taste, though possibly with higher political motives, the custom which, antecedent to our conquest of Mysore, had been religiously observed, of reading the Koran several times a day beside the tomb of Hyder, was continued by the Duke of Wellington; and, in fact, it is continued to this hour. During the few days I lived in the palace, I went repeatedly to hear these moolahs offer up their prayers. All the Mussulman priests of the subverted dynasty were pensioned by the British government, and also most of the principal officers and civilians of Tippoo's court. This wise policy included the celebrated old Purneah, the late sultan's prime minister—the Talleyrand of India; who, though he served at different times many different masters, behaved to each and to all with rigid fidelity, and stood by them heartily as long as they kept their respective heads above water.

After remaining about a fortnight, wandering over the Mysore country, I turned my steps to the westward, with the intention of passing the Ghauts and reaching the coast, where I considered it would not be difficult to procure a sea conveyance to Bombay. The resident at Mysore advised me to call at the Rajah of Coorg's capital on my way, and furnished me with a letter of introduction to that native prince.

Early in the morning, therefore, of a beautiful day in the latter end of September, I set out from the bare table-land of Mysore, and proceeded towards the hilly and thickly wooded regions overhanging the Malabar country. When I awoke in my palankeen, I knew not very distinctly where I had got to, for I had been dreaming all night about the monstrous statue at Shrivanabalagol, I sat up, drew the door gently back, and, looking out, found myself in the midst of one of the most curious and magnificent scenes which my eyes had ever beheld. It seemed as if I were travelling among the clustered columns of some enormous and enchanted Gothic cathedral, compared to which the minster at York, or the cathedral at Winchester, would have seemed mere baby-houses. The ground extended on all sides as smooth, and flat, and clear of underwood, as if the whole had been paved with grave-stones. From this level surface rose on every hand, and as far as the eye could penetrate into the forest, immense symmetrical clusters of bamboo, varying in diameter at their base from six feet to twenty or thirty, and even to twice that width, as I ascertained by actual measurement. For about eight or ten feet from the ground, each of these clusters or columns preserved a form nearly cylindrical, after which they began gradually to swell outwards, each bamboo assuming for itself a graceful curve, and rising to the height, some of sixty, some of eighty, and some even of one hundred feet in the air, the extreme end being at times horizontal, or even drooping gently over, like the tips of the feathers in the Prince of Wales's plume. These gorgeous clusters stood at the distance of fifteen or twenty yards from one another, and being totally free from the interruption of brushwood, could be distinguished at a great distance—more than a mile certainly, in every direction, forming, under the influence of an active imagination, naves and transepts, aisles and choirs, such as none but a Gothic architect ever dared to conceive. Overhead, the interlacing curves of the bamboos constituted as complete a groined roof as that of Winchester or Westminster, on a scale of grandeur far beyond the bold conception even of those wonderful artists who devised that glorious school of architecture, which, in the opinion of many people, has raised the dark centuries immediately subsequent to the era of the crusades almost to the level of the days of Pericles.

On counting the separate bamboos in some of the smallest, and also in some of the largest clusters, I found the numbers to vary from twenty or thirty to upwards of two hundred, and the height generally from sixty to a hundred feet from the ground to the point of intersection of the curves overhead. Most of the bamboos were somewhat thicker than a man's thigh at the ground, where, as I have before said, they are clustered so close as to be almost in contact. They then taper off very gradually to the extreme end, where the point is not thicker than a quill. There occurs a joint at about every foot and a half, distinguished not only by a slight flat ring or fillet, but by a set of small branches, eight or ten feet long, striking out at right angles to the main bamboo. These minor sheets are again divided into joints, from which minor series of shoots, still more minute,

are thrown out; and so on for many successions, the last always terminating in a sharp-pointed narrow leaf, two or three inches long, and half an inch wide in the middle, not unlike a large tea-leaf when spread out.

As each bamboo of the hundred or more forming the cluster sends out shoots from every joint, and as all the joints of these subordinate branches do the same, a compact mass is formed by these innumerable little branches, which cross one another at every possible angle. If a person were to fill a hat full of pins or needles, and shake it about for some minutes, it might give a notion of the inextricable confusion which is presented to the eye on looking into one of these clustered columns of bamboos. It is only at the top, where the bend takes place, that the foliage has full room to play, or where the tapering arms of this magnificent plant form, by their meetings and crossings, a complete system of pointed arches.

What surprised me very much, and greatly puzzled me at first, was to observe that, notwithstanding the multitude of lateral shoots from each of the main bamboos, and from all the subordinate branches, not a single trace of displacement, or the slightest obstruction to the growth of any branch, could be detected. Every person must have heard of the astonishing rapidity of the growth of the bamboo. It is said, indeed, that in one season it starts up to its whole length. I do not know if this be true, but I am quite certain that if one of the main bamboos were to spring from the ground in the centre, or even near the sides of the cluster, and that from its joints there were at the same time to sprout out the lateral branches I have described, it would be impossible for the main stem to force its way through the obstructions presented by the net-work, formed by the little branches growing from the joints of the other bamboos in the cluster.

After examining a considerable number of the clusters, however, we can, I think, discover how Nature manages this difficult affair. When the bamboo first springs out of the ground, it is about as thick as a man's wrist, but it is armed with a very sharp point, not unlike that of a wooden instrument called a fid, which sailors make use of in splicing ropes. As this point is extremely hard, and the bamboo always highly polished, it readily makes its way through the very thickest masses of the little branches, as one might thrust a sword through a quickset hedge. Thus, the bamboo, whose growth is prodigiously rapid, starts upwards, and, by reason of its smooth sharp end, and perfectly smooth sides, easily makes its way to its extreme length and thickness, without, as I conceive, sending out a single lateral shoot from any of its joints till the utmost extent has been gained. The subordinate branches from the joints then, but not till then, begin to start out horizontally, all these being, after the manner of the principal stem, exempted from lateral shoots at their joints till their utmost length has been reached. In consequence of this beautiful arrangement, none of these successive branches, however numerous or delicate, find any difficulty in piercing the confusion.

I saw bamboos in every different stage of this process, and, in particular, I noticed several of the main stems rising to the height of seventy feet and upwards, of a clear yellow colour, and evidently of recent growth; but without a single lateral branch growing from their joints from top to bottom; and this led me to infer that their extreme height had not yet been attained, or was just attained.

On reaching a pretty little town, with the long name of Eerajunderpet, I was received by an officer of the Rajah of Coorg, whose dominions I had entered. A guard of sepoys, with several elephants, and a most inconvenient allowance of ear-splitting music, were placed at my disposal by the Soubadar, as he styled himself. I begged him, as delicately as I could, to stop the tom-toms, and then insinuated *something* about breakfast. I suspect this functionary had often before been sent to meet my countrymen similarly circumstanced, for I could see the ends of his huge whiskers gradually curling upwards by the muscular action of that kind of smile called a broad grin, as he listened to my demand, and pointed to the choultry, or caravanserai, close at hand. In truth, in spite of the picturesque beauties of the bamboo forest, and the witchery of the still more magnificent scenery which embellishes the summit ridge, or crest of the Ghauts, I had not been able to exclude from my thoughts the chances, *pro* and *con.*, of a good meal at the end of the stage. Accordingly, I felt my heart leap as I caught sight of a table-cloth, flapping in the breeze in the verandah, above which rose a goodly range of dishes, a huge tea-pot, and a bowl brim-full of eggs. The attendant lifted up the covers, and displayed a pyramid of rice shining like a snow wreath in the sun, supported by a curry, the savoury smell of which spread so far as to reach the senses of the tired bearers of my palankeen, who seemed as hungry as myself. In the joy of the moment, I presented them with a whole sheep, of the small mountain breed, for their dinner.

During the rest of this day I travelled, sometimes in the palankeen, and sometimes on the back of one of the elephants sent me by the Rajah of Coorg, for whose capital, Markara, I was now bound. The road wound about amongst the hills, or along the valleys of the Ghauts, and across numberless small streams, besides the great Cauvery, now shrunk to a rivulet, which we forded repeatedly during this journey. When the sun became disagreeably hot, at those places where the woods opened, I had only to dismount and pop into the palankeen; but, when we plunged into the forests, and enjoyed the shade of the teak-tree, iron-wood, banyan, and tamarind, I again got on the back of my elephant. She was an exceedingly fine animal, in the prime of her life, as I was told, being only fifty years old, called Bhigelee, or Lightning. Your grand folks in India, upon state occasions, place a howdah, or castle, on their elephants, and ride about in triumph, like Darius in Le Brun's pictures of Alexander's battles. But, for ordinary travelling, a good thick matting, or rather a pad, answers the purpose; in fact, this method is the more agreeable of the two on a journey, for there is less motion felt when one is seated close to the elephant's back, than when perched three or four feet higher, and wagged about like the head of a Chinese mandarin over a chimney-piece. Even with the pad, it is not very

easy to keep on when the road is steep; and this would be impossible, were not a piece of cloth, twisted up like a rope, placed before and behind, which may be grasped by the hand, according as the inclination of the road is upwards or downwards.

An elephant is proverbially one of the surest-footed animals in the world; but we came, during this journey, to some passes so very steep, and so much covered with loose stones, empty water-courses, broken trunks of trees, and all the other débris left by mountain torrents, that I quaked not a little at times, as we passed along the edges of precipices. But our trusty Bhigelee appeared perfectly self-possessed on these occasions; and, as the mahout, or driver, made me remark, she never took her foot off one stone till she had made sure of a solid foundation for the next step. Sometimes she made this inspection with her trunk, sometimes with her foot; but she never once made a false move, though occasionally she slid down for a yard or two on all-fours.

At one place, the bough of a tree happened to cross our path, upon which the elephant raised her trunk and wrenched it from the stem in a moment, in order to use it as a fly-flap; and so brisk were her movements, that she had very nearly whisked both the mahout and myself into the valley. At another turn of the road, where we crossed a running stream, her thirsty ladyship sucked in a hogshead or two, and then, having filled her trunk, and wishing to cool herself, she squirted the contents so dextrously over her sides and back, that we were both completely drenched. For this trick, Miss Bhigelee received a suitable correction at the hands of her guide, albeit his age, as he said, was less than that of the elephant by about a dozen years. He told us, that he had scarcely been absent from her a whole day since he was born; and that, even when a mere crawling infant, he used to be left by his mother under the elephant's care.

It was at the close of twilight when I reached Markara, the Rajah's capital; and not a little astonished was I to be shown into a large house, built in the taste of the English bungalows at Madras, furnished, also, in the European style. In one of the rooms, which was brilliantly lighted up, I found a table laid with twenty covers; and, before I had been there three minutes, a sumptuous dinner was placed on the table, as if it had been brought by magic. A couple of dozen mutes, in white robes, stood round like the ivory attendants of the Black Prince in the fairy tale. I lamented that I had not twenty mouths, to do more justice to my host's ultra hospitality. As it was, however, I did pretty well; for the keen air of the Coorg mountains, and the rough-riding of the elephant, had set my appetite so sharply, that I felt rather provoked to receive a summons to attend the Maha Rajah of Coorg, Lingra Jender Wadeer, just as I had smoked out my first chillum, and was considering whether or not to break in upon a second bottle of claret, for the Rajah sported some of "Maxwell and Key's best long cork." Not a moment was to be lost, however; so I jumped up, and being shown to another suite of apartments, found a bedroom and dressing-room, for all the world like those of any hotel in Jermyn Street. I rigged myself in my best coat, tucked in my sword, screwed on my cocked hat, and rattled away to the durbar.

This worthy Rajah's whim, as I soon discovered, was to have everything in one department of his palace, as much as possible, in the English style. In this view, the floor of the room in which he received his European guests was laid with Brussels carpets, and round the walls stood pianofortes and organs, music-books, sofas, card-tables, writing-desks, clocks of a dozen shapes and sizes, mirrors, and pictures—all English. He seemed enchanted with my amaze at this strange jumble of upholstery; nothing, however, was ordered aright, for immediate use; so that it looked more like one of my friend Mr. Dowbiggin's warehouses in Mount Street, in which furniture was to be stowed away, than an English drawing-room, which it was intended to represent. As I entered the durbar, the Rajah claimed my admiration of the disposition of his goods in such a way that it was impossible to contradict him. In one instance, indeed, the sagacity of the native outran his taste; and, in the midst of much that was trashy, and even childish, betokened a degree of knowledge of character for which, indeed, the Hindoos are peculiarly distinguished. He led me up to a picture of Sir Arthur Wellesley, sent to him by the General, at the Rajah's request, after the great campaign against Tippoo.

"There," said he, "look at that picture; there is the portrait of the greatest man we have ever known in India."

Just as these words were interpreted, I was surprised to hear a band of music strike up the tune called, I think, "The Hunting of the Stag," of which song the burthen is, "Hey ho, chevy!" To this most incongruous tune, a set of Indian figurantes, or notch-girls, were made to dance before us, and very strange work they made of it! After a short audience, the Rajah observed that I must be tired with the day's journey, and allowed me to retire.

Next morning I got up betimes, and took a survey of the grounds, which satisfied me, that although nothing could be more picturesque in the way of mountain scenery, a more absurd spot for a stronghold could not have been selected in Asia. It would indeed be a famous place to keep a state prisoner in, for the fort stands in the centre of an amphitheatre of hills, each overlooking, and either commanding it, or the approaches to it, within half cannon-shot. I returned to the fort, after standing on the top of one of these knolls for about half an hour, watching the mist as it gradually stole out of the valleys, and became invisible in the higher air, whenever it mixed with sunbeams as they peeped over the eastern ridges of the Ghauts. Meanwhile, the light wind, which generally flits about at that hour, shook down the dew-drops from the branches of the well-steeped forest; and I had almost forgotten, in the coolness of the air, and more than Alpine beauty of the Indian landscape, how far I had wandered from the scenes which it recalled. At the door of the bungalow, I was met by half-a-dozen attendants, who salamed to the ground, and led the way to the parlour, where a feast sufficient to have satisfied twenty half-pay officers was laid on the table. I counted eighteen dishes, and I forget how many silver tea-pots, cream-jugs,

besides crockery enough to have equipped an Indiaman—such was the magnificent pleasure of the Rajah of Coorg.

In due season, a message came to me from his highness, to say he wished me to go over the new palace, which he was fitting up like an English house, and upon some of the details of which he desired to have my opinion. As things were in actual progress, I took the liberty of suggesting a few changes, with which he was greatly pleased. He had already made some very erroneous arrangements, probably from acting upon imperfect information; and, as even his queer taste revolted at these incongruities, he felt delighted to have a European's authority for making further alterations.

On returning to the great square in the centre of the building, we found three chairs placed for us on a Turkey carpet, spread on the ground in the open air. The Rajah took a seat and made me come beside him, after placing his son, a nice little boy, nine or ten years of age, on my right hand. This young fellow was gaily dressed, with a huge overspreading turban. A dark circle, about the tenth of an inch broad, was painted round each of his eyes, which gave him a strange staring look; and on his cheeks, brow, and chin, were placed small black marks, or beauty spots, about twice as large as the head or dot of a note in music.

The whole area of the court was now begirt with soldiers, each holding, as high as his face, an immense bill-hook or knife, the blade of which near the extremity could not be less than three inches wide, and diminishing gradually towards the hilt. This formidable instrument, well known in Indian warfare under the name of the Coorg-knife, is often used as a sword, and when handled by men who are not afraid to close with their antagonist, is said to be a most efficient weapon.

On a signal given by the Rajah, a folding-door was thrown open on one side of the court, and in stalked two immense royal tigers, held by several men on each side by long but slight ropes attached to collars round the animals' necks. These beasts appeared very tractable, for they allowed themselves to be led close to us. I confess I did not much like this degree of propinquity, and eyed the slender cordage with some professional anxiety. Meanwhile the Rajah and his son, and the officers of the household, appeared quite unconcerned, though the tigers passed within a few yards of them, and, as it seemed to me, might easily have broken loose. What degree of training these animals had undergone, I know not; but, after a little while, the Rajah, probably to increase the surprise of his guest, directed the men to let go the ropes and to fall back. There we sat, in the midst of the open court, with a couple of full-sized tigers in our company, and nothing on earth to prevent their munching us all up! The well-fed and well-bred beasts, however, merely lounged about, rubbed their noses together, and then tumbling on the ground, rolled about like a couple of kittens at play. I could, however, detect the Rajah spying at me out of the corner of his eye, and half-smiling at the success of his trick. After a time the men were recalled, and the tigers dragged off.

A pair of lionesses and two furious-looking buffaloes were then introduced, but nothing could be more innocent or more respectful to the Rajah and his son. Like Falstaff, indeed, they seemed to have an instinctive knowledge of the true prince. Yet, for all this, I caught myself several times edging my chair back a little bit, and looking out for a clear place to escape, as the monsters stalked up and down the court, and once or twice actually touched the edge of our carpet with their feet. On these occasions, that part of the circle of guards which stood behind us, advanced just so far as to bring our chairs on the outside of their ring, and to place themselves between the beasts and us. On clapping their hands and flourishing their knives, the lionesses and other beasts moved a little farther off; after which the guards again dropped to the rear. Still, this seemed rather a poor protection; at least, I had my recollection so full of the rapid motions of the same class of animals which I had seen baited at Mysore, that I could discover nothing which need have prevented the tiger from whipping off the heads of the Rajah and the heir-apparent, or, at all events, that of their guest, who, having no particular claims to the throne of Coorg, could reckon on none of the benefits of instinctive respect.

A troublesome story, too, respecting a touch of insanity in the Rajah's family, recurred to my thoughts occasionally. I had heard somewhere of his predecessor calling for a fowling-piece one day in open durbar, and having ordered forth his cabinet-ministers, he deliberately popped them off, one by one, like sparrows—an honour to which, it is said, they submitted with edifying patience and propriety. I confess I felt rather queerish when he sent one of his family for a double-barrelled gun, a beautiful piece of workmanship, bearing the name of Joe Manton on the lock. I admired it of course.

"That piece," said the Rajah, "was made here by one of my people."

I ventured respectfully to point to the name of the London maker.

"Pooh!" cried his highness, "what's in a name? The man who could make such a piece as this could surely copy a name. Bring the London gun."

And, strange to say, when the model from which one of his native gunsmiths had made the piece was placed in my hands, so exact was the imitation, I could scarcely tell which was the original, which the copy. On pulling the trigger of each, however, the difference in the vivacity of the spring made the distinction apparent. I had often heard of their powers of imitation, but had no idea before of its extent.

When we had satisfied ourselves with an inspection of these pieces, the Rajah gave orders for half-a-dozen tiger's cubs, about eight months old, and as many puppy-dogs, to be set to play before us on the carpet, while a full-grown royal tiger was at the same time dragged forward and pitted against a bear for a real battle in the open court. Anything more disproportionate or absurd cannot be conceived than this match; and so, perhaps, the poor brutes thought, for fight they would not, although both of them were well thumped and forced against each other by the attendants. At length a brilliant thought struck the Rajah.

"Tie them together!" exclaimed his majesty; and accordingly the rope which was fastened to the tiger's collar was hitched to the belly-band of the bear.

Neither party liked this. The tiger roared, and the bear growled, while the Rajah and his son laughed and clapped their hands in ecstacy at their own good joke. Of course the guards and courtiers joined in the mirth, and the whole quadrangle rung with mixed shouts of the soldiers, the growl of the bear, and the roar of the tiger. Of all the parties in this singular concert, the tiger appeared to be the most discomposed. His eye flashed fire, his tail waved from flank to flank in the most ominous style. I thought at one time this was to turn out no laughing matter; for, if the angry animal, when at length he lost all patience, had taken a direction towards us, he might have demolished the dynasty of Wadeer, or at least made a vacancy for an officer in his Britannic Majesty's Navy. Fortunately he chose exactly the opposite course, and running furiously across the court, made a flying leap right into one of the low windows of what the Rajah called his English drawing-room. The glass and framework of the window were of course dashed to pieces in a moment, and the pianos, pictures, and book-cases, must soon have shared the same fate, had not the tiger's progress been checked by the weight of the wretched bear, which hung outside, half-way between the window-sill and the ground, somewhat after the fashion of the golden fleece over a mercer's door. The tiger we could no longer see, but we could hear him smashing the furniture at a great rate.

The Rajah, who naturally thought this was a little too much of a good thing, desired his people to enter the room, in order to catch hold of the ropes fastened to the tiger's collar, by which he had been brought forward in the first instance. This being accomplished, and the tiger secured, the rope connecting him and the bear was cut, upon which poor Master Bruin tumbled to the ground, no great height, indeed, and off he moved very sulkily to his den. Meanwhile the tiger was dragged out of the house by main force, and sent to the rear.

As soon as order was restored, five elephants made their appearance, none of them standing less than thirteen feet high. At the bidding of the Rajah, these grand fellows knelt down, prostrated themselves, rolled over on their sides, lifted their keepers in their trunks, and whirled them high in the air. In short they went through all manner of gambols.

"Now," said the Rajah, "let us have an elephant dance!"

I forgot to mention before, that on one side of the court a group of pretty dancing-girls had been exhibiting all the time of the show, without attracting much notice. These ladies being ordered forwards, one of them was stationed before each of the elephants as a partner, and the keepers, slipping down from the animals' necks, seated themselves cross-legged on the ground, in front, and within reach of the animals' fore-feet. The music now struck up, the girls began to dance and sing, while the keepers, by touching the elephants' feet gently with little sticks, made them hobble likewise. As the unwieldy monsters jogged from side to side, they beat time with the ends of their trunks on the bare heads of their keepers, shook their monstrous ears, and stared at the girls. Never was anything more grotesque! The effect, indeed, was so ludicrous, that even the poor Indian girls themselves appeared at a loss whether to laugh or to cry at being set to dance a jig with elephants to the tune of "Drops of Brandy," or some such exotic air—villanously played by Hindoo pipers—a glorious concourse of absurdities! The day was pretty well advanced before these sports were over, for we had still to witness sundry sheep-fights, and ram-fights, and an endless variety of antics by human tumblers.

At last the Rajah broke up this queer durbar, or levee, ordered out the palankeens, wished me a safe descent of the Ghauts, and, as I thought, was about to dismiss me rather unceremoniously; but, on the contrary, he did me the high honour to accompany me as far as the outer gate of the fort, on the hill, a distance of at least a mile from the palace. A double row of soldiers lined the road the whole way; and these being joined by many hundreds of labourers from the adjacent fields, the crowd became quite dense towards the end of the line. The most profound silence was observed, however, and as each person stood with his broad-bladed knife in his hands, raised nearly to his mouth, in what we should called an attitude of prayer, the palms being pressed together, the effect was very lively and striking. On reaching the gate the Rajah presented me with one of the Coorg knives already described, and a handsome sandal-wood walking-stick.

The dress of these bold mountaineers is simple, and not inelegant. On their heads they wind a long white cloth into a broad flat turban, and round their bodies wrap a loose white frock, reaching two inches below the knee. This robe or tunic is tied round the waist with a shawl of more or less richness, according to the wealth of the parties.

In the evening I found my way back to Eerajunderpet, and strolled into the woods in quest of adventures. What should I meet but a Roman Catholic priest, "all shaven and shorn," speaking a strange mixture of Portuguese, Spanish, and Hindustanee! As I possessed a slight smattering of each of these languages, we got on pretty well. Although this good padre had passed much more than half his life away from Portugal, he still took a lively interest in those distant scenes, which, as he said, he never hoped to visit again. He had heard, he told me, of the peninsular war, but he knew none of the details. The worthy missionary's thoughts, indeed, were much more earnestly engaged in works of peace and charity, than in those of war and conquest. He showed me his native school, where a number of boys were taught to read, and, with an air of exultation, assured me he could reckon upon there being at least nine or ten hundred Christians in the Coorg country, of which the population is said to be fifty thousand.

Next morning I descended the celebrated Poodicherum Pass, in the great Malabar Ghauts—a gorgeous specimen of rugged but well-wooded mountain scenery. At the bottom of the pass I found bearers who carried me to Erricore, and so onwards to Cananore, a very interesting trip along the coast.

After various common-place adventures and worrying delays, I reached Tellicherry, and lastly Mangalore, where I considered myself most fortunate in catching an English ship just sailing for Bombay, loaded with teak timber for the dock-yard. By taking advantage of the land-winds at night and the sea-breezes in the day, we reached our port within a few hours of the time to which Sir Samuel Hood had limited my excursion.

CHAPTER XVIII.

VISIT TO THE SULTAN OF PONTIANA, IN BORNEO—SIR SAMUEL HOOD.

In the summer of 1814, Sir Samuel Hood made a voyage, in His Majesty's ship Minden, to the eastern parts of his station. We called first at Acheen, on the north end of the island of Sumatra, where we held some very amusing intercourse with the king of that district, whose capital the Admiral visited. From thence we steered over to Pulo Penang, or Prince of Wales' Island, and thence down the straits of Malacca, entering the China Sea by the beautiful Straits of Sincapore. The Admiral's chief object was to visit Java; but as there lay three routes before him to choose between, viz. the Straits of Gaspar, the Straits of Banca, and the Caramata passage, he preferred taking the last and widest, which also led him near the western shore of the immense island of Borneo. On reaching the equator, he steered in for the mouth of the great river Lava, which passes the town of Pontiana. The weather being very favourable, the ship was anchored, and the barge got ready for an expedition.

At four in the morning, on receiving the joyful intimation that I was to be officer of the boat, I lost no time in getting together everything likely to be useful—a sextant, artificial horizon, spy-glass, chart, compass, and Nautical Almanac, besides a Malay Dictionary; for Sir Samuel, with his wonted ardour, had already commenced the study of that language, saying, and saying truly, that before our cruise amongst the Eastern islands was over, he should cut us all out in speaking Malay. This boast he afterwards made good; for, before he completed his travels in Java, he could maintain a conversation with the natives with very little assistance from the interpreter, merely by the help of a vocabulary, which he made for himself and carried in his pocket. He actually travelled over more than twelve hundred miles of ground on that island, during the last quarter of which, at the eastern end, I had the good fortune to accompany him. I had previously visited alone about seven hundred miles of the interior of that noblest of all our insular possessions in the East.

It is truly grievous to think how unwittingly we allowed that magnificent possession to slip through our fingers, in 1814, at the grand settlement of affairs. But after the downfall of Buonaparte, such a game of chuck-farthing was played with kingdoms, that even a gigantic country like Java failed to excite its due share of notice, or was totally lost sight of in the haze which obscured everything at a distance from the scene of excitement.

We had some little difficulty in finding our way in the barge, for the mouth of the river of Pontiana lay so completely hid amongst low cane-brakes, mangroves, and other aquatic trees and shrubs, which grow thickly along the western shores of Borneo, that until we came quite close, no inlet was perceptible. The first hit we made proved wrong, and lost us three or four miles; and it was not till nearly noon that we reached the rush of fresh and troubled water, which indicated the true entrance. The Admiral desired greatly to observe the sun's meridian altitude, saying, he had a childish sort of anxiety to take an observation exactly on the Equatorial line. His excellency, however, though he could command many things, could not command this; for although our fellows gave way lustily, so as to stem the current running out, and we had a full half-hour to spare, we could not effect a landing in good time. On reaching what had seemed the shore, no footing could be found anywhere. Even the little boat which we carried with us in tow of the barge, though she threaded the mangrove stems and roots, and went in much further than the barge, could not reach anything like dry land. As the main bank refused to afford us a resting place, we put off, and rowed as briskly as we could to a small island about half a mile from this treacherous shore; but this, too, proved a cheat, for what we took to be solid ground consisted merely of a mass of green shrubs, growing on the ridge of a soft slippery mass of mud just peeping above the water.

As the sailors, by this time, were pretty well exhausted with rowing so long in the hot sun, they hailed with great joy the sea-breeze which just then set in. They soon stepped the masts, hoisted the sails, and laid the oars in.

"Now go to dinner, men," said the considerate chief, "this rattling breeze will not carry us up far, and you will pull all the better for a good bellyfull."

Just as this judicious order was given and while we were still laughing at the recent adventure, which reminded us of Sinbad's mistaking a whale for a solid rock, our eyes were attracted by the sight of another island, much smaller than the first. It seemed, indeed, like a little grove or tuft of palm-like foliage, rising out of the water somewhat in the fashion of our Prince of Wales's feather. None of the party had ever seen such a tree before, and every one tried to guess what it might be; but all were puzzled. At length, a diminutive moving black speck showed itself at the root, or centre, from which these fairy-like branches radiated.

"It is a rock with a tree on it," cried one.

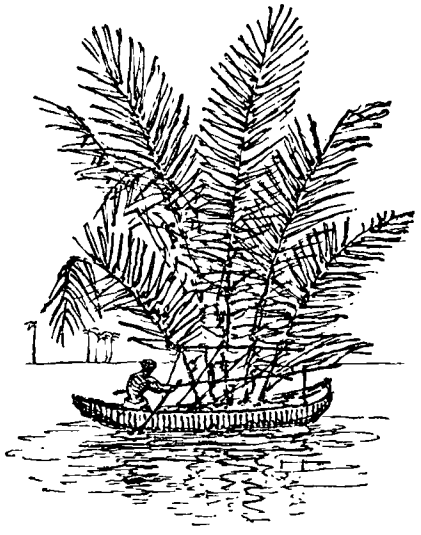
"Nonsense!" said Sir Samuel, "there are no rocks hereabouts; the soil for many a league is alluvial."

"It skims along like a witch," exclaimed a third; "it is surely alive!"

"Let us sail to it whatever it be," said the Admiral, waving his hand to the coxswain to sheer the barge further from the side of the river.

As we drew near, we discovered our phenomenon to consist of a fishing-canoe, gliding along merrily before the sea-breeze, with no other sails than half-a-dozen branches of the cocoa-nut tree placed in the bow, and spread out like the feathers

of a peacock's tail. These were held together by a slender bar of bamboo, and supported by small strips of bark to the stern, in which sat a naked Malay.



The Admiral proved a true prophet, for the deceitful sea-breeze presently lulled, and it cost us a very hard row to accomplish our purpose against the stream. The town of Pontiana stands on a low point of land formed by the confluence of two mighty rivers, names to us unknown. This particular spot is always held sacred in India, and is known under the Hindoo name of Sungum. I suspect, however, that the Malays and other Mahometans, who inhabit the coasts of most of the Indian Islands, acknowledge no superstitious predilections for one spot more than another, and consider such things as mere prejudices unworthy of the followers of Mahomet, their great military prophet. Probably the Sungum point has some local advantages belonging to it, as I observe it is generally appropriated by the strongest party in every country. At all events, it has the advantage of communicating directly with both the rivers, by whose junction the Sungum, or solid angle, is formed. In the instance of Pontiana, the Mussulmans had taken possession of it, though it was formerly a Dutch settlement, while the Chinese were left to occupy the corners opposite to the Sungum, on the right and left banks, respectively, of the river formed by the junction of the two streams. Thus three considerable cities had been built facing one another, and each displaying on the river a multitude of boats and barges, canoes and proas, in crowds which would not have disgraced the show at London Bridge, and, of course, indicating considerable wealth and activity.

We came upon this grand view quite abruptly, and having no expectation of encountering anything so magnificent, were taken rather by surprise. Two enormous Chinese junks occupied the centre of the stream, each of them rising out of the water nearly as high as the poop of a line-of-battle ship. Along the shore, on both sides, lay a fleet of eight or ten sail of junks, some of them very large, and all bearing enormous white flags, in the centre of which sprawled huge dragons and other monsters familiar to the eyes of all fanciers of old China jars.

This was the first time that many of us had seen genuine or unmixed specimens of Chinese or Malay towns on a great scale, and our admiration was great accordingly. In strict language, it cannot be said that these Chinese are at home in Borneo; but in point of fact, they certainly are so. The truth is, that China Proper is so much over-crowded that its surplus population must find vent somewhere and somehow; and, in spite of the severest laws forbidding people to leave the Celestial realm, they emigrate in vast numbers. In this respect, the enactments of England against the export of guineas bear a close resemblance in their efficiency to those of China against the exportation of human beings. Be this as it may, it has so happened, that all the islands which lie to the eastward and southward of the China seas (the Philippines, the Moluccas, and the Isles of Sunda) possess large colonies of Chinese on their coasts.

I remember hearing, when I was in Batavia, that the Chinese population of that city alone amounted to thirty-five thousand. Indeed, persons who have attended much to the subject on the spot assure me there is good reason to believe that, in process of time, the Chinese will occupy exclusively the whole of the Eastern islands. They are the most industrious of human beings, and are physically strong and energetic; they also possess a cheerfulness and patience of disposition which makes them careless about danger and difficulty. Nor are the Chinese entangled with any of the ritual superstitions of their Hindoo neighbours, and in that respect are even more free-souled than the Malays, their only rivals on the coasts of the Oriental archipelago, although I suspect that they are not very strait-laced Mussulmans. The Malays form at present a fringe of population round most of the islands in those seas, whatever may be the description of the inhabitants in the interior. This we certainly find to be the case along four or five hundred miles of the north coast of Java; but the moment we strike inland, a different and indigenous race appears. The Malays are the masters by sea, and, like a certain nation "throned in the West," are said to lord it in tolerably imperious style. On the other hand, the Chinese, who are the worst possible sailors, but who are agriculturists by nature and by necessity, as well as taste, are gradually outmastering the Malays along shore; and in time, I have little doubt, they will become the chief proprietors of the soil. They may then build forts at the mouths of the rivers, and bully the good folks of the interior. Thus, ages hence, Pontiana may become a second Antwerp; and protocols in Chinese, Malays, and Bornese, occupy all Eastern men's thoughts from Timor to Formosa!

In the mean time, as there existed no dispute about the navigation of the River Lava, we rowed up very peaceably towards the great city of Pontiana. On our meeting a canoe with a Malay in it, the Admiral, who had been studying Marsden's dictionary all the way, stood up in the barge, made the men lie on their oars, and to their great asto-

nishment, and probably to that of the native, called out in the Malay tongue,

"Which is the way to the sultan's house?"

To Sir Samuel's unspeakable delight, the man whom he addressed understood him, and after offering to show us the landing-place, paddled off ahead of us. Our fellows gave way as hard as they could, but the Malay kept the lead; and as we shot past the Chinese towns, one on each bank, the natives crowded to the beach, as much astonished, no doubt, with our strange cocked hats, swords, and oddly-shaped boat, as we could be with their long tails and wild-looking junks, or with the creases which every Malay carries by his side. This fierce-looking weapon is not, in form, unlike the waving sword one sees in the pictures of the angel Michael, though it is not above a foot and a half in length.

The sultan's cousin received the Admiral and his party at the gate of the palace, and led him by the hand along a causeway of flag-stones to the residence of the monarch. Directly in the middle of the gateway, which was only ten feet wide and about as many in height, there stood a twenty-four-pounder gun. On the top of the arch there was built a small square room, from holes in which peeped out the muzzles of five or six field-pieces, the whole affair resembling very much that part of a child's box of toys which represents the stronghold or castle. Within the high wall surrounding the palace, we counted innumerable large guns scattered about, apparently with no other object than to be seen, as if the mere look of a cannon were expected to do the work of a fight! The same number of mock barrels of gunpowder, similarly disposed, would have answered the purpose equally well, or perhaps better; for there appeared no way in which the guns could be fired, without doing much more injury to the besieged than to the besiegers.

On we went, till we were met by the sultan himself, at the inner side of the quadrangle. He courteously conducted the Admiral to a large room or hall of audience, and, having begged his guest to sit down at a small table, took a chair by his side, and began a conversation as if they had been long acquainted. Of course, in spite of the Admiral's proficiency, this could not be accomplished without an interpreter; and the services of a very clever Malay boy, whom we had brought with us from the ship, were brought into requisition. The hall, in which we were first received, might have been about fifty feet square, bleak, unfurnished, and comfortless, with an uncovered mud floor. It was so feebly lighted by a few windows almost hid by Venetian blinds, that we could only discover that the roof had been left bare and unfinished. After sitting for about ten minutes, the sultan rose and led the way to another apartment apparently of still larger dimensions, but literally so dark, that, had it not been for the light entering by the door we had left, and the one ahead of us, we could not have moved along without breaking our shins over the stones, sticks, and other rubbish lying in the way. We had next to make rather a difficult transit along a precarious kind of bridge, formed of a single plank laid across an ominous-looking pool or puddle of mud, which divided these two branches of the palace from each other.

All at once we were ushered into a splendid room, seventy or eighty feet square, brilliantly lighted, and not ill furnished, but strongly contrasted with the darkness and dirtiness of the suite we had passed through. This total want of keeping, it may be mentioned, is quite in Oriental taste. They know tolerably well how to be magnificent on occasions; but they never learn how to be uniformly decent. The Asiatics, and even some other nations which might be named nearer home, can seldom afford to be taken by surprise. Indeed, I am not sure if more than one country can be alluded to, in which the people are at all hours ready to receive strangers, and have no occasion to make a fuss, or to change anything when a rap comes to the door.

In the centre of this gorgeous room, on a dais, or a part of the floor raised to about a foot and a half above the level of the rest, and laid with a rich Turkey carpet, stood a long table, at the top of which the sultan placed the Admiral, and then made the signal for tea. First entered an attendant, bearing a large tray, on which were ranged several dozens of exceedingly small cups. This he placed on the carpet, and then squatted himself down, cross-legged, beside it. Another attendant soon followed, bearing the tea-pot, and he likewise popped himself down. After a conjuration of some minutes, the cups were brought round, containing weak black tea, exquisite in flavour, but marvellously small in quantity. There appeared no milk, but plenty of sugar-candy. Some sweet sherbet was next handed round, very slightly acid, but so deliciously cool, that we appealed frequently to the vase or huge jar from which it was poured, to the great delight of the sultan, who assured us that this was the genuine sherbet described by the Persian poets. It was mixed, he told us, by a true believer, who had made more than one pilgrimage to Mecca.

At the upper end of the apartment, in a deep recess, partly hid from our view by a rich festoon of shawl drapery, we could just discover the sultan's bed, flanked by large mirrors, beyond which, in an adjacent chamber, was probably stowed away the sultan's most favoured wife. But all this department of the establishment was thrown into such deep shade, that we could see none of the ladies, nor any of his highness's progeny, except one little boy, whom he introduced to us at supper. He appeared to be about five or six years old, very like his papa in miniature, rigged with turban and robes of cloth of gold. At first, the little fellow looked somewhat startled; but he soon recovered his dignity, and sat on our knees, without much apprehension of being swallowed up.

Both the upper corners of the room were screened off by white curtains, eight or ten feet high, so as to form smaller chambers. One of these served the purpose of a pantry, or subsidiary kitchen, at least we observed the dishes issuing from it, and thought we could distinguish the well-known sound of the cook's angry reproaches—a note which, like that of muttering thunder, is nearly the same in every climate. The other corner we soon made out to be a sort of temporary nook, from which the ladies of the palace and the young sultans and sultanas might spy the strangers. This we ascertained from seeing

sundry very pretty faces thrust out occasionally between the folds of the curtain, and by the sound of many an ill-suppressed giggle amongst the peeping damsels.

A half-choked squall from some rebellious baby, or a sound thwack on the pate of an over-curious urchin, betrayed the nursery in terms not to be mistaken. Indeed, I do not wonder at their eagerness to look at the Admiral, whose very appearance, in any company in the world, or under any circumstances, must have claimed no small share of admiration. The characteristic prominence of the Hood nose, so well known for a glorious half century in the navy, with the tall and gallant bearing of our lamented chief, to say nothing of the Nelson-like circumstance of his right arm having been shorn away in battle, and, I may add, the peculiar sweetness of his voice, and the benignant expression of his countenance, which, while they won all hearts to him, showed a mind entirely at peace with itself. Everything, in short, that was great and amiable, conspired to render Sir Samuel Hood one of the most interesting officers of his time.

The sultan appeared to enter into his guest's character at once, and neither overloaded him with attentions, nor failed to treat him as a person to whom much respect was due. I heard Sir Samuel say afterwards, that he was particularly struck with the sultan's good breeding, in not offering to assist him in cutting his meat. The sultan merely remarked that few people were so expert as his guest even with both hands; adding, neatly enough, that on this account the distinction which his wound had gained for him was more cheaply purchased than people supposed. While the Admiral was hunting for some reply to this novel compliment, his host remarked, that in Borneo it was considered fashionable to eat with the left hand.

The supper, which soon followed the tea, consisted of about a dozen dishes of curry, all different from one another, and a whole poultry yard of grilled and boiled chickens, many different sorts of salt fish, with great basins of rice at intervals, jars of pickles, piles of sliced pine-apple, sweetmeats, and cakes. Four male attendants stood by with goglets of cool sherbet, from which, ever and anon, they replenished our glasses; besides whom, a number of young Malay girls waited at a distance from the table, and ran about nimbly with the plates and dishes.

All persons who approached the sultan fell on their knees, and having joined their hands in the act of supplication, lowered their foreheads till they actually touched the ground. The sultan held out his hand, which the people eagerly embraced in theirs, and pressed to their lips. What they had to say was then spoken, and after again bending their foreheads to the ground, they retired. This ceremonial took place only in the outer room or hall of audience, for no one, except the strangers and one or two of the principal officers of state, was permitted to approach nearer than twenty or thirty feet of the raised part of the floor where we sat. At that distance, a group of about twenty persons, probably the nobles of the court, sat cross-legged on the ground in a semicircle facing the sultan, and in profound silence during the whole supper, no part of which appeared to fall to their share.

Soon afterwards the cloth was removed, and a beautiful scarlet covering, of the texture of a shawl, substituted in its place. This might, perhaps, give us a hint for after dinner. Instead of dull mahogany, or dazzling white, why might we not spread over the table a cloth couleur de rose for the benefit of the complexions of the company?

The sultan now produced a letter which he had received from Lord Minto when governor-general, thanking his highness for the friendly disposition he had always manifested towards the English people trading to the great city of Pontiana, and in a particular manner expressing his obligations for the manner in which Mr. Palmer, a wealthy merchant of Calcutta, had been received by the sultan, when his ship was wrecked on the west coast of Borneo.

"Mr. Palmer," said the sultan, "lived for some weeks with me, and on returning to Calcutta, sent me these beautiful mirrors and chandeliers. But," added he, pointing again to the governor-general's letter, "much as I value embellishments so splendid, I esteem far more this little signature, and these few words from Lord Minto. Still," continued his highness, "my wishes in this respect have never been fully satisfied. I have long desired to possess a specimen of Sir Samuel Hood's writing; and though I never ventured to hope that I should have had an opportunity of seeing his signature written with his own hand, I have always felt how essentially that circumstance would add to its value in my estimation."

It was wonderful how well the shrewd little Malay interpreter expressed all this rigmarole to the Admiral, who cheerfully agreed to the proposal, and desired me to send for his writing-case. As I rose, the Admiral whispered to me, "I wish you would contrive, at the same time, to see what the boat's crew are about. Try, also, if you can get them something to eat; the fellows must be hungry enough by this time—but mind they don't get too much toddy."

I found the crew seated on the mud floor of a large room close to the beach, and open on all sides, like a tent without walls. The Johnnies were in such high glee, that I feared they had already trespassed too deeply on the toddy pot; but I was glad to find that their satisfaction arose from a safer source, in the shape of a glorious hot supper, which Jack was tucking in to the great delight and astonishment of the natives, who had been ordered by the sultan to supply them with as much curry and rice as they chose to eat. The cook had no sinecure of it that evening!

I soon returned to the palace, and the Admiral, having written several lines for his host's album, expressed his wish to retire to rest. The sultan instantly rose, and having conducted his honoured guest to the outer door, he left him in charge of half a score of the principal officers of the palace, amongst whom were several of the sultan's own near relatives. This guard of honour accompanied Sir Samuel to his bed-room, and it cost him a good deal of trouble and some address to free himself from his company—their intention evidently being to bestow their tediousness upon his excellency all night.

Scarcely were this party dismissed, when, to our great surprise, the sultan himself came to the door of the house in which the Admiral and his suite

were lodged. Sir Samuel feared that he might possibly have given offence to some of the worthy connexions of the sultan, by dismissing them too abruptly, and that the sultan had called for "an explanation." The honest Asiatic had no such gunpowder fancies in his head. On the contrary, the object of his visit was to press upon the Admiral's acceptance two large and beautiful diamonds. The poor Admiral was now reduced to a great dilemma. He could not, he thought, with any official propriety, accept the present; and yet he felt very unwilling to hurt the generous sultan's feelings, especially as his highness had paddled at midnight through the mud of his own approach to make the offer. The sultan saw at a glance what a mistake he had made, and instantly withdrew, laughing, however, and saying that such was the custom of his nation. I think the Admiral was sorry afterwards that he had not carried in the boat some trinkets of correspondent value, or that he had not accepted the diamonds, and afterwards sent something still more precious to the sultan.

Very early in the morning, long before there was the least peep of dawn, the Admiral roused us all out of bed, ordered the boat to be manned, and declared his intention of dropping down the river while it was yet cool, so as to reach the ship before the fierce heat of the sun had set in. I suspect, also, that he wished to escape the salutes and other fussifications, of which he had seen some preparations over night. But in this he partly reckoned without his host, for scarcely had we gained the distance of two or three hundred yards from the shore when the heavy guns of the batteries began to fire a royal salute. The night was uncommonly dark and still, and the successive flashes and reports of the cannons were followed by a long series of echoes from the edges of the damp forests lining the banks of the three different branches or forks of the river. The Admiral, who had the finest perception possible for all that was picturesque or beautiful, was exceedingly struck with the grandeur of this nocturnal salute, and having made the men lay their oars across the boat, while she drifted quickly down the river, he stood up in the stern-sheets in order to enjoy the scene more completely. At each of the first dozen discharges we were near enough to be illuminated by the flash, and a smile of delight could be seen on the veteran's countenance as sounds so dear to him once more caught his ear. It is not improbable that they recalled to his memory the glorious night action of the Nile; in which it is not too much to say, that amongst all the distinguished warriors whom Nelson had gathered round him, there was not one on whom his great chief more firmly relied in battle, or to whom, personally, he was more attached in private life.

A trifling incident occurred shortly afterwards, which suggested to our thoughts another important service of Sir Samuel Hood's, which, although it be familiarly known in the navy, may not be so fresh in the recollection of persons on shore. A question arose in the boat as to whether or not the land-wind was blowing. Some said there was a breeze up the river, while others maintained that the wind blew down, towards the sea. The Admiral let us go on speculating and arguing for some time, and then said, "You are both wrong; there is not a breath of air either up or down the river. At all events we shall soon see, if you will strike me a light." This was done accordingly; and the Admiral, standing on the after-thwart, held the naked candle high over his head, while the men ceased rowing.

"There, you see," exclaimed he, "the flame stands quite upright, which proves, that if there be any breeze at all, it blows no faster than the stream runs down."

As he yet spoke, the flame bent from the land, and in the next instant was puffed out by a slight gust from the forest.

"Ay! that's something like!" exclaimed the commander-in-chief; adding, in an under tone, as he resumed his seat, "I have known the time when a flaw of wind, not greater than has just blown out this candle, has rendered good service to his majesty."

We knew what was meant, and so will every naval man; but others may be interested by being told, that early in the year 1794, when Capt. Hood commanded his majesty's ship Juno, he had very nearly lost his ship in a most extraordinary manner. The port of Toulon, though in possession of the English at the time of his departure on a short trip to Malta, had been evacuated while the Juno was absent; and as the land was made in the night, no suspicion of that important change of affairs arose in the mind of any one. With his wonted decision, therefore, into the port he dashed; for, although the Juno carried no pilot, Captain Hood's knowledge of every port he had once visited rendered him comparatively indifferent on that score. A couple of the sharpest-sighted midshipmen were stationed with glasses to look out for the fleet; but no ships were seen—for the best of all reasons—none were there!

One vessel only, a small brig, could be detected, and the captain, supposing the fleet had run into the inner harbour during the recent easterly gale, resolved to push up likewise. The batteries all kept quiet, and though the brig hailed the frigate as she passed in a language so indistinct that no one could make it out, not the least suspicion was excited.

Captain Hood, in his official letter to Lord Hood (see *Naval Chronicle* for 1807, vol. xvii. p. 11), says, "I suppose they wanted to know what ship it was, and I told them it was an English frigate called the Juno." The brig, however, was not quite so courteous in return; for they merely replied by the word "Viva," but made no answer to the captain's repeated inquiry, both in English and French, as to the brig's name, and the position of the British admiral's fleet. As the Juno passed under the stern of this treacherous little craft, a voice called out, "Luff! luff!" which naturally induced Captain Hood to put his helm down, from an idea that shoal water lay close to leeward of him. Nothing could have been more adroitly managed by the Frenchman, for before the frigate came head to wind, she stuck fast upon the shoal, to which the words "Luff! luff!" had no doubt been intended to direct her.

A boat was now observed to proceed from the brig to the town. As there was but little wind, and the water perfectly smooth, the Juno's sails were clewed up and handed; but before the men were all off the yards, a gust of wind came sweeping down the harbour, and drove her off the shoal

so suddenly as to give her brisk stern-way. The anchor was speedily let go, but when she tended, the after-part of her keel took the ground, and the rudder could not be moved. The launch and cutter being instantly hoisted out, the usual preparations were made to lay out a kedge, to heave the ship off.

At this critical moment a boat came alongside. The people appeared anxious to get out of her, and two of them, apparently officers, came up the side. They said it was the regulation of the port, as well as the commanding-officer's orders, that ships should go further in to the harbour, there to perform ten days' quarantine. In the despatch relating this transaction, Captain Hood says, "I kept asking them where Lord Hood's ship lay;" and those who remember Sir Samuel's impatient manner when any one to whom he addressed himself trifled with his questions, will easily imagine how he must have perplexed and overawed the two Frenchmen, who really knew not what to do or say next. In the mean time, one of the mids, who happened to be thrusting his head forward after the investigating manner of this enterprising class of officers, said apart to the captain,—

"Why, sir, they wear national cockades!"

"I looked at one of their hats more steadfastly," says Captain Hood in his narrative, "and by the moonlight clearly distinguished the three colours."

"Perceiving they were suspected," continues Sir Samuel in his narrative, "and on my questioning them again about Lord Hood, one of them replied, 'Soyez tranquille, les Anglais sont de braves gens, nous les traitons bien; l'amiral anglais est sorti il y a quelque temps.'"

Sir Samuel well says, that it may be more easily conceived than words can express what he felt at that moment. In one instant, the situation of the poor Juno, which was almost desperate, became known throughout the ship. The officers naturally crowded round their captain to learn the worst, while the Frenchmen, bowing to the right and left, grinned and apologised for the disagreeable necessity of making them all prisoners! The rest of this singular story, unique in the history of the Navy, and altogether wonderful, considering the formidable nature of the trap into which the frigate had fallen, will be best told in the words of the accomplished officer himself, to whose presence of mind, courage, and professional dexterity, the escape of the ship was entirely due. The personal regard in which the captain was held by every officer, man, and boy on board, and the thorough confidence which they possessed in his talents, enabled him to undertake a service which an officer held in less esteem might have found it very difficult to carry through. It used, indeed, to be said of Hood's ship that, fore and aft, there was but one heart and one mind.

After describing the deportment of the French officers, he goes on to say, in his despatch, that "a flaw of wind coming down the harbour, Lieutenant Webley* said to me, 'I believe, sir, we shall be able to fetch out if we can get her under sail.' I immediately perceived we should have a chance of saving the ship; at least, if we did not, we ought not to lose her without some contention. I therefore ordered every person to their respective stations, and the Frenchmen to be sent below. The latter perceiving some bustle, began to draw their sabres; on which I directed some of the marines to take the half pikes and force them below, which was soon done. I believe in an instant such a change in people was never seen—every officer and man was at his duty; and I do believe, within three minutes every sail in the ship was set, and the yards braced ready for casting. The steady and active assistance of Lieutenant Turner and all the officers prevented any confusion from arising in our critical situation; and, as soon as the cable was taut, I ordered it to be cut, and had the good fortune to see the ship start from the shore. The head sails were filled; a favourable flaw of wind coming at the same time gave her good way, and we had every prospect of getting out if the forts did not disable us. To prevent our being retarded by the boats, I ordered them to be cut adrift, as also the French boat. The moment the brig saw us begin to loose sails, we could plainly perceive she was getting her guns ready, and we also saw lights in all the batteries. When we had shot far enough for the brig's guns to bear on us, which was not more than three ship's lengths, she began to fire; also a fort a little on the starboard bow, and soon after all of them, on both sides, so they could bring their guns to bear. As soon as the sails were well trimmed, I beat to quarters to get our guns ready, but not with an intention of firing till we were sure of getting out. When abreast of the centre of Cape Sepet, I was afraid we should have been obliged to make a tack; but, as we drew near the shore, and were ready to go about, she came up two points, and just weathered the cape. As we passed very close along that shore, the batteries kept up as brisk a fire as the wetness of the weather would admit. When I could afford to keep the ship a little off the wind, I ordered some guns to be fired at a battery that had just opened abreast of us, which quieted them a little. We then stopped firing till we could keep her away, with the wind abaft the beam, when, for a few minutes, we kept up a very lively fire on the last battery we had to pass, which I believe must otherwise have done us great damage. At half-past twelve, being out of reach of their shot, the firing ceased."

The whole of this admirable piece of service was performed so quickly, and at the same time with so much coolness, that there occurred little or no opportunity for any remarkable individual exertion. Everything, as I have heard it described by Sir Samuel Hood himself and by the officers, went on as if the ship had been working out of Plymouth Sound at noon-day. One little incident, however, which caused much amusement in the ship, will help to show the degree of regard in which Sir Samuel was held by those immediately about him; and to disprove the proverb of no man being a hero to his valet-de-chambre.

Dennis M'Carty, an old and faithful servant of Captain Hood's, who was quartered at one of the main-deck guns in the cabin, stood firm enough till the batteries opened on the Juno. No sooner had the firing commenced, and the shot came whizzing over and through all parts of the ship, than Dennis, to the great amaze and scandal of

* The late Capt. Webley Parry, C.B., long afterwards the friend and follower of Sir Samuel Hood, who, as may well be supposed, never forgot any of the men who stood by him at the most trying hour of his professional existence.

his companions, dropped the side tackle-fall, and fairly ran off from his gun. Nothing in the world, however, could be further from poor Pat's mind than fear—except fear for his master, behind whom he soon stationed himself on the quarter-deck; and wherever Captain Hood moved, there Dennis followed, like his shadow. The poor fellow appeared totally unconscious of any personal danger to himself, though the captain was necessarily in the hottest of the fire. At length, Sir Samuel, turning suddenly round, encountered the Irishman full butt.

"Ho! Master Dennis," exclaimed the captain, "what brings you here? and why do you keep running about after me? Go down to your gun, man!"

"Oh, by the powers! your honour," replied Dennis, "sure I thought it likely you might be hurt, so I wished to be near you to give you some help."

There was no resisting this; the captain laughed in the midst of the battle; and poor Dennis was allowed to take his own way, having no care for himself.

It would be quite impossible, within any moderate compass, even to enumerate the important services which Sir Samuel Hood rendered to his country, both before and after the time alluded to; nor can it be necessary to do so, for they are still so fresh in the recollection of the Navy, that they are often quoted as examples in every walk of duty. His forte appears to have been that invaluable quality of all great commanders, promptitude in seeing what was best to be done, and decision of purpose in carrying it into execution. At the moments of greatest doubt and difficulty, and when scarcely any one else could see through the confusion, he appears invariably to have taken those useful practical views, which the calmest subsequent reflection proved to have been the most expedient.

One of the most important, and also the most amusing instance of the effect of his resolute and characteristic presence of mind and boldness of manner, occurred in the summer of 1797, when Nelson attacked the town and fortifications of Santa Cruz, in Teneriffe. The enterprise failed; Nelson was wounded and carried on board in the only boat not captured or destroyed, while the remaining officers and men were necessarily left without any means of defence or escape. Sir Thomas Troubridge and Captain Hood now found themselves in the very heart of the town, at the head of only a handful of seamen and marines carrying merely a few pikes, but surrounded by several thousands of well-armed Spaniards. As the boats had been all demolished in the surf, or knocked to pieces by the fire of the batteries, retreat became impossible, and capture or destruction would inevitably have awaited them the moment daybreak showed their small numbers and wretched plight. In this dilemma, Captain Hood went forward alone to the Spanish governor, and said he was sent by the commanding-officer of the British troops and seamen within the walls to state, that as they had been disappointed in their expectation of finding treasure in the town, they were disposed to return peaceably to their ships, if boats were provided them for that purpose, but that should any means be taken to molest or retard them, they would then set fire to the town in different places, and force their way out of it at the point of the bayonet. With the utmost deliberation, and without betraying the smallest haste or anxiety, he then pulled out his watch, and said, "I am directed to give you ten minutes to consider of this offer."—See the *Naval Chronicle*, volume xvii. page 19.

Don Antonio, the governor, looked amazed at the coolness of this proposal from persons whom he conceived—and with good reason—to be his prisoners. He proposed to hold a council of war immediately, and let the British commander know their determination in the course of an hour; but Captain Hood saw the impression which his argument had produced, and again holding up his watch, declared he could not spare his excellency a single second; and, as the fatal minute approached, he turned round and prepared to rejoin his shipmates. The governor, alarmed at the possible consequences of driving men so commanded into extremities, acceded to the proposals made by Captain Hood, and agreed to provide the defeated party with boats.

Next morning, accordingly, the Spaniard, having once pledged himself to certain terms, kept good faith, and not only allowed them all to return to their ships, but, previously to the embarkation of the invaders, he considerately furnished each of the sailors with a bowl of wine and a biscuit, filled their boats with fruit and other refreshments, and gave orders that such of the British as had been wounded, should be received into the Spanish hospital!

It is by such deeds of true nobleness that the asperity of actual war is softened, and that kindly feelings take the place of that bitterness which only excites to angry retaliation, without at all advancing the great objects for which opposing nations are contending.

I have often thought that much of this kindness on the part of the generous Don, as well as the more important part of the service, may have been due chiefly to the mere personal address of Sir Samuel Hood, whose appearance and manner were at all times unspeakably winning, and especially pleasing to the well-bred Spaniards. As these outward qualities were backed by solid judgment, professional knowledge, and the most thorough disinterestedness, he became almost irresistible, even on occasions when most other men might have seen little hope of success. It is not, then, surprising, that a mind like Nelson's should attach itself cordially to that of Sir Samuel Hood, or that every successive incident of their joint services should rivet more closely and firmly the alliance of such kindred spirits.

There entered into the character of Sir Samuel Hood some peculiarities, which, although I have never seen them stated, appear well to deserve the attention of professional men. When it is said that he was thoroughly disinterested, it must not be thought that he was indifferent to his own share of credit which belonged to *meritorious* service: for he conceived his own reputation, and that of the profession, as identical with that of the country, and, in proportion as he rose in fame and rank, so this obligation to preserve his renown unsullied appears to have pressed upon his mind. But, whenever the accession of credit became

merely individual or personal to himself, and did not seem in his eyes calculated likewise to augment the honour of the service as well as his own, he not only felt careless about it, but actually staved off the honour and glory, which other men might have eagerly courted.

Of this a remarkable instance was afforded at the battle of the Nile. Previous to entering into that great action, Nelson, as every one recollects, hailed Captain Hood's ship, and consulted him as to the best method of attack.

"What think you," said the admiral, "of engaging the enemy to-night?"

"I don't know the soundings," was the answer, "but, with your permission, I will lead in and try."

The result is well known; but I believe it is not so generally known that, in the first draft of the despatch which Nelson wrote, he gave to Captain Hood the merit of confirming him in his determination of attacking the French fleet that night. On showing this letter, however, to Hood himself, he entreated that it might be altered, saying "that they were all brothers, engaged in the cause, and that the admiral would have received exactly the same advice from any other captain in the fleet whom he might have consulted." The paragraph was therefore omitted in the despatch. But, on many accounts, this omission is certainly to be regretted; for it essentially adds to the true credit of Nelson himself, instead of diminishing it, that he not only knew how to estimate such concurrence in opinion, but how to acknowledge and reward the services of men of Sir Samuel Hood's stamp.

I have this anecdote of the change in the despatch from one of his nearest connexions, and one of the dearest friends to his memory. He himself particularly wished the alteration in the despatch not to be told at the time; but, as the story crept out somehow, it seems very material that the facts should be well authenticated. When the circumstance was mentioned to Sir Samuel Hood many years afterwards, by the friend from whom I have received authority to state it, and he was asked if it were true, he confessed that it was so; but exclaimed,

"How the devil could all this have got wind?—I never mentioned it before to a living soul."

As there is hardly any professional anecdote which retains its freshness of interest more entire than the memorable parley above described between Nelson and Hood, on the eve of the battle of the Nile, I venture to give another version of it, which is substantially the same, and is calculated to confirm, in a pleasing manner, all that is essential. The following particulars I have been favoured with by Captain Webley Parry, then first lieutenant of the Zealous.

When steering for the enemy's fleet, Sir Horatio Nelson hailed the Zealous, and asked Captain Hood if he thought he might venture to bear up round the shoals. The answer was—

"I cannot say, sir; but if you will allow me the honour of leading into action, I will keep the lead going."

"You have my permission, and I wish you good luck," was the reply; and, as Nelson said this, he took off his hat. Captain Hood, in his hurry to return the courtesy of his admiral, dropped his hat overboard. He looked after it, laughed, and exclaimed,

"Never mind, Webley, there it goes for luck! Put the helm up, and make all sail."

Captain Foley of the Goliath, being close to the Zealous, perceiving this manœuvre, guessed what the orders were, and bore up likewise, so that when the two ships had shaped their course, they were nearly abreast of each other. The Goliath being a little in advance, which of course was rather annoying, Captain Hood stood on for some time, in hopes of being able to take the lead in the Zealous, but finding this could not be without jostling and confusion, he turned round and said—

"This will never do! Well—never mind; Foley is a fine, gallant, worthy fellow. Shorten sail, and give him time to take up his berth. We must risk nothing that will tend to the enemy's advantage; and we shall all soon have enough to do."

This was instantly done; the Goliath shot ahead, and Captain Foley had the glory of leading the British fleet into action. By some accident, however, he failed to place the Goliath in opposition to the headmost ship of the enemy's line. The experienced eye of Hood instantly saw the inevitable consequence, and while the Goliath passed on to the second in the line, Sir Samuel placed his own ship, the Zealous, alongside the first, exclaiming in the joy of his heart, "Thank God! my friend Foley has left me the van ship!"

The following private letter, written some time afterwards, from Lord Nelson, is so characteristic of the writer, and so flattering to Sir Samuel, that I venture to insert it.

"St. George, March 13, 1801.

"My dear Hood,—Many thanks for your kind letter; and believe me, there is not a man breathing that loves you more than myself. I am glad you have quitted the Courageux; she would have drowned you in chase of an enemy's squadron. I have directed four crosses to be made, and they are this day sent to Mr. Davidson's, I expect. I send you an order (of St. Ferdinand and Merit). No; I have written to Davidson to deliver it to Troubridge, who will send it you; it is to be worn round your neck like the order of St. Anne. I send you a piece of riband to suspend it by. We sail to-morrow for Yarmouth. I only hope Cornwallis will meet the French fleet, and that you will be in company. Ever, my dear Hood, your obliged and affectionate

"Nelson and Bronte.

"Capt. Hood."

The mixture of affection, business, playfulness, and professional allusions, in this short letter, is strikingly indicative of the intimacy and full understanding which existed between these distinguished officers. It is always delightful, when one gets a peep behind the scenes, to find such men on terms of true friendship.

The whole life of Sir Samuel Hood proves, that he never took into his calculations what effect any particular measure might or might not have upon his individual reputation or fortunes, but that he looked exclusively to its probable effect upon the interests and honour of his country and the service. He possessed, it is true, the keenest possible relish for well-earned fame; but he enjoyed no applause which came unconnected with the general

good: and his anxiety about his own reputation, which was very great, and to which I have already alluded, rested upon what he conceived the true view of professional principle and public spirit, in its most genuine acceptation. Every action of his life showed that he was not only far beyond the reach of any envious feeling, but that his chief pleasure was to bring forward merit wherever it was to be found, and he was always more ready to bestow distinction than to claim it for himself. Whenever it became his good fortune to act with the army, he brought these principles into the most useful play, to the advancement of the public service, and greatly to the satisfaction of his sister service.

It is also highly delightful, as well as instructive, to know that these generous sentiments were speedily participated by all those who enjoyed his confidence, and worked along with him. I am indeed persuaded that he very often converted selfish and sulky officers into useful and cheerful public servants, in no great length of time, and not unfrequently to their own great surprise. What, then, must have been the extent of his influence over the minds of men similarly disposed with himself!

When, unfortunately for the profession and for his country, he fell sick at Madras, and knew that his last moments were fast approaching, he called his faithful friend and old follower in many ships and many actions, Lieutenant (now Captain) Walcott, to his bedside, and said to him—

"It will be too hard, Walcott, to die in this cursed place; but should I go off, let nothing deter you from going home and accounting to the Admiralty for my command of the East India station."

These were nearly the last intelligible words he uttered; and they serve to show how strong, even in the hour of death, was his sense of professional duty. As Lieutenant Walcott had served during the whole of Sir Samuel's India command in the double capacity of flag-lieutenant and secretary, and had enjoyed the Admiral's entire confidence, he, and he alone, possessed the means of "accounting to the Admiralty" for the measures completed, or in progress, for the good of the service, and therefore the Admiral suggested to him the propriety of his going home to report matters in person.

The senior officer, who succeeded to the command in the Indian seas, felt so desirous of following up the friendly intentions of his lamented predecessor, that knowing the late Admiral's attachment to Lieut. Walcott, he offered to promote him into a death vacancy, which had either actually taken place, or was certain to fall within a week or two. Moreover, he assured him, that after the necessary time had been served, he should have the first vacancy for post promotion.

These were indeed tempting offers to a young officer devotedly attached to his profession; but they had no influence over a man bred in the "Sam Hood school." The Admiral's dying injunction appeared to this right-minded officer fully as binding, or, if possible, more so, than a written command must have been in his lifetime.

To England Walcott went accordingly; and the difference in professional standing which it made to him was this:—had he remained in India, as Sir Samuel Hood's successor proposed, he would undoubtedly have become a post-captain of 1816, instead of which, his name now stands in 1822, six years later on the list! Had it been sixty times six, however, it would have made no difference in his conduct.

Along with all this professional merit, which won for Sir Samuel Hood the devoted respect of every one who served with him, there were mingled qualities of a nature more domestic and endearing, but not less decided. The unaffected suavity of his disposition, the absence of all affectation from his manners, and the kindly alacrity with which he entered into the wishes and feelings of others, won all hearts to him, from the depths of the cockpit even to the "throne's height." Of this some pleasing examples occurred when he returned to England, immediately after the loss of his arm.

When it was decided that he should be taken ashore at Ryde in the Isle of Wight, his cot was laid on a grating, and the cabin bulk-heads being knocked down, the wounded chief was hoisted out and lowered into the boat. "The whole ship's company, man and boy, came on deck, and I never shall forget this most affecting scene," writes an eye-witness, "for you would really have thought every man in the ship was his brother!"

In the course of the same evening, a lady and gentleman called at Sir Samuel's lodgings at Ryde, not for the idle curiosity of asking how the wounded commodore was, but with the considerate purpose of mentioning what they imagined would give him pleasure. They had that day received a letter from a gentleman holding a high situation in the household of George III., stating that the good old monarch, who was much attached to Sir Samuel, had actually shed tears when he heard of his loss, and exclaimed—

"Would to God the French had their frigates again, and poor Hood his arm!"

The affectionate respect of his ship's company in the morning had touched him closely; but this extension of sympathy quite unmanned the veteran warrior.

Of his friendly disposition to all persons whom he had it in his power to oblige, I could give many anecdotes. The following little circumstance, however, is so characteristic that it may suffice.

When the army returned from Spain, after the battle of Corunna, in 1809, there were between twenty and thirty officers accommodated in Sir Samuel's cabin. Notwithstanding the almost constant pain in his leg from an old wound, he gave up his cot to one of these gentlemen who was wounded, and slept himself either on the deck, or on a carronade slide, during the whole passage. It happened that amongst these officers there was a distant connexion of Lady Hood's, and so remarkable did the Admiral's attention to him appear, that the young man very naturally ascribed the notice he received to this circumstance. But when the father and mother of the young man afterwards called upon the Admiral to thank him for the uncommon kindness he had shown to their son, they learnt that Sir Samuel had not only been totally ignorant of the connexion alluded to, but did not even know that a person of that name had been on board his ship during the passage!

"Indeed," said he, "I hardly knew the names

of half my guests. But who," he continued, "would make any distinctions amongst such war-worn and brave fellows?"

The curious fact is, such was his general kindness, that each of these military officers, his passengers, fancied the Admiral was more civil to him than to any one else. He suspended on this occasion all the usual strait-laced etiquettes of the quarter-deck discipline, and permitted the harassed soldiers to lie down and read between the guns, or wherever they pleased. His great delight was to coddle them up, and recompense them, as far as he could, for the severe privations they had undergone during Sir John Moore's retreat, and nothing entertained him so much as seeing the relish with which these hungry campaigners partook of his hospitality. On the day after the battle of Corunna, when these gentlemen came on board, he ordered a cock to be driven into a hogshead of prime old sherry; and his satisfaction was perfect, when his steward, with a rueful countenance, communicated to him, on arriving at Spithead, that "his very best cask of wine had been drunk dry on the passage by the soldier officers!"

CHAPTER XIX.

COMMISSIONING A SHIP.

It was originally my intention, in this concluding volume of Fragments, to have called the attention of my young friends in the naval service to several points connected with their profession, which I had reason to believe might prove useful to them. It was my wish, in the first place, to have taken a general survey of the nature and practice of our system of discipline, and to show the relative duties of all classes of officers and men. I thought also of throwing out a few general hints on the subject of officer-like and gentleman-like conduct, and in particular of debt and duelling—two rocks upon which many young men split, more, I am persuaded, for want of due instruction than from any deficiency either of principle or of spirit. I then wished to add some words on the most appropriate courses of study, professional, scientific, and literary, which, without interfering too much with their severer and more indispensable occupations as naval men, might be most conducive to the improvement of the rising generation of officers.

These topics, however, and several others, soon swelled so greatly under my hand, that I felt it necessary to curtail the original scheme, and now, instead of embracing the whole field, I propose (in the humble capacity of interpreter) to select only such parts of this copious subject as seem capable of being rendered intelligible to persons not immediately connected with the sea, and yet may prove more or less useful to those who intend making the navy their profession.

Most people are curious to know how, from a state of total inaction, or what is called "laid up in ordinary," a ship is brought forward into real service. I have therefore thought it right to "begin with the beginning," and tell how a man-of-war is first commissioned. This leads on to the interesting topic of fitting-out; that is, getting in the masts, putting the rigging overhead, stowing the holds, and so on. The next obvious point to be considered in the equipment of a ship is, the force she is to carry, which naturally brings us to the very curious question of naval gunnery. A ship, however, may easily be commissioned, fitted, provisioned, and armed, by parties of riggers, or by men from other ships, without having any regular crew; but it is impossible she can go to sea, or perform any of the varied and arduous services required of a vessel of war, unless she be properly manned, and the people on board be subjected to good discipline. This necessity involves two of the most important considerations which it is the duty of naval men to attend to, I mean impressment, and the improvements in the naval system by which, perhaps, that practice may in time be in a great measure disused. Finally, if we suppose a ship equipped, armed, manned, and disciplined, it becomes a curious problem to determine in what manner she may be most expeditiously and safely conducted from place to place over the trackless sea, in the darkest nights, and in all weathers. This branch of the subject carries with it no trivial degree of interest, from the intimate connexion between navigation and astronomy, and from its being one of the most direct and useful applications of the truths of that sublime science to the daily business of life.

In the following chapters I propose to touch consecutively on each of these topics; but without seeking to exhaust any one of them, I shall endeavour to place them in a popular light, or, at all events, to render them intelligble to those who, from patriotism or from mere curiosity, are already disposed to take an interest in such matters. For the rest, I shall be well pleased if any of my young naval friends can pick up a stray hint here and there, which may help to keep them out of scrapes, or enable them to do their duty to their country, to the service, and to themselves, with less chance of error and remorse than if they were to act by mere rule of thumb, and heedlessly to suppose that any real excellence can be attained without much hard labour and patient thought.

As soon as an officer receives official intimation that he is appointed to the command of a ship, he proceeds either to the Admiralty or to the dock-yard at the port where the ship may happen to be laid up in ordinary, and takes up his commission. In the first place, however, he must wait upon the admiral commanding at the out-port where the ship is lying, and having reported himself, he proceeds to the admiral-superintendant of the dock-yard, to whom he communicates his having received orders to commission such and such a ship. I may here mention, that, since the Navy-Office has been incorporated with the Admiralty, the admiral-superintendant has taken the place of the commissioner of the dock-yard, within the walls of which it is understood that he has the exclusive charge and responsibility. He has likewise the care of the ships in ordinary, of all the moorings, and generally of all the vessels, and every description of stores in the naval arsenal. An account of the commissioner's duties, which have now devolved upon the admiral-superintendant, would furnish a most interesting and useful insight into our naval economy; but the topic

is one of great extent and complexity, and if treated at all, must be treated separately.

In the mean time, I must proceed to put my ship in commission. The first thing to do is to get hold of one of the warrant-officers to "hoist the pendant," which is a long slender streamer, having a St. George's cross on a white field in the upper part next the mast, with a fly or tail, either Red, White, and Blue, or entirely of the colour of the particular ensign worn by the ship; which, again, is determined by the colour of the admiral's flag under whose orders she is placed. The pendant being hoisted shows that the ship is in commission, and this part of the colours is never hauled down day or night. At sunset, when the ensign is hauled down, a smaller pendant, three or four yards in length, is substituted for the long one, which, in dandified ships, waves far over the stern. Ships in ordinary hoist merely an ensign. The boatswain, gunner, and carpenter, who are called the warrant-officers, always remain on board, even when the rest of the officers and crew are paid off, and the ship laid up in ordinary. These valuable personages, under the general superintendence of the captain of the ordinary, an old officer of rank, and assisted by a few lads to row them to and from the shore, keep the ships clean, and guard against fire and pillage, to which they might otherwise be exposed at their moorings in the different creeks and lakes, as they are called, which constitute the harbour.

The next step, after the ship is commissioned, is to open a muster-book. The requisite blank books and other papers will be supplied to the captain by the superintendant of the dock-yard, in order that the names of the officers and men may be entered as they gradually assemble. The admiral being then informed that the ship is in commission, he orders the commandant of marines to embark the proper complement of men from the barracks.

The master-attendant, in the mean time, has been applied to for a receiving-ship or hulk, alongside of which the ship may be placed, and in which the crew may live while she is fitting out. The same officer will likewise give the boatswain a "note" for one or more of what are called harbour-boats—strong affairs, not very handsome, but good enough to perform the rough sort of work required in fitting out, which would sadly destroy the ship's regular boats. The boatswain's demand for scrapers, buckets, and junk for swabs, should be made out and approved, that, from the first moment to the last, the hulk may be kept clean.

This word hulk suggests rather unpleasant images to the mind of a person who knows the term only through the medium of police reports, the Newgate Calendar, and other elegant works of a similar stamp. But to naval men it will recall many days and evenings of jollity and fine fun, when, after long and wearisome cruising, voyaging, and knocking about in foreign parts, the ship being ordered to refit, sails into an English harbour, and warps alongside of some "old beast of a hulk," as she is rather playfully than contemptuously styled. But, in sooth, it must be owned, that the epithet is not ill bestowed; for it would seem as if human ingenuity had, in this instance, been racked to devise methods by which one of the prettiest and most graceful of objects could be degraded into the most unsightly of floating bodies. A ship in full trim, well painted, with her yards square, and ropes all tight and trig, swims on the water truly like a thing of life; and as far as taste, symmetry, and comfort, are concerned, she is a fit abode for an angel, as the Jacks used to say of their beautiful frigate La Pique. On the other hand, when converted into a receiving hulk, the same celestial mansion is degraded into a domicile, as far as appearances go, for any demon.

We all know what resolute men can accomplish when they set about a thing in earnest; but it requires a trip to Portsmouth to be able to understand how far the force of art can go in degrading a ship's fair looks. I need not mention that the masts and bowsprit are drawn out of a ship which is to be converted into a hulk; but no stranger could guess what is the purpose of the curious erections which are substituted, and look for all the world like gibbets. Sometimes, by accident, the bar is carried across the upright pole of one of these machines, and then, though less like a gallows, it offends the eye still more, by its ghost-like resemblance to a crucifix; but how unlike to those glorious emblems on the skyline of cathedrals, or waysides of Catholic countries, filling the imagination with thoughts at once sublime and holy!

"What can be the object of all those ugly-looking things?" is a question I have frequently heard asked.

"To hang up the warrant officers' clothes upon," is the reply; though some people might think it still more appropriate if the word clothes were left out, and the aiders and abettors of such ugly inventions tucked up bodily instead.

The hatchet of the backwoodsman is not more ruthless than the destroying axe of the dock-yard maty (the cant word for all the artificers employed in that department), when stripping a ship, as he well calls it, to convert her into a hulk. Away go the quarter galleries and quarter badges; off are torn the wreaths of flowers, and all the tasteful fretwork, together with the stars, crowns, and garters, which adorned the stern, in graceful keeping with the ornamental and useful painting of the ship's side. And here let me protest against a distinction which is sometimes too rigidly made, afloat as well as on land, between what is ornamental and what is useful, implying, forsooth, that ornament is not of use. As if the gratification of good taste were not at least as desirable as the gratification of any other sense! We require the concord of sweet sounds in order to please the ear; and the man who has an atom of music in his soul counts it as so much clear gain to hear a good tune well played. Nor can I see why it should be considered less a matter of actual profit to please the sense of sight by the judicious disposal of graceful forms, and by the superaddition of what is vulgarly called "mere ornament" to the simply useful parts of our ships or houses. I seriously consider that, in men-of-war especially, it becomes a most important part (I was going to call it, of the discipline, but certainly) of the general efficiency of the vessel, that her looks should not be neglected. I remember seeing a large and fine frigate lying at Spithead, so black and dirty-looking, and so totally without those ornaments in

carved work and painting to which all seamen's eyes have become accustomed, that even professional men took her for a convict ship—her own officers became ashamed of her—the crew deserted, and no fresh hands would enter for such "a beastly looking tub." A few pounds' worth of paint, and a little encouragement to the carpenter, by a commander who knew the real utility of ornament, might, in the course of a week, have rendered her the most popular ship in the fleet.

On the same principle it would, I think, be practically useful to render these receiving hulks less disgusting objects to look at; and I am glad to find that such an idea is getting afloat in the proper quarter. For it is in vain to hope that the men will take any pride in keeping the inside of their hulk in the proper state of order and cleanliness when her external appearance is so hideous. Not a trace of ornament is left—everything is shaved away to the very timbers—head and stern are made alike abrupt and dumpy—the ports are converted into windows barred like those of a jail—a clumsy accommodation-ladder, as it is called, sticks out on one side, while four enormous chains, with links through which Harlequin could leap, hang from the bows and quarters, tying the poor hulk by the neck and heels. This may be necessary, as there may not be room to swing; but why not paint the ships as of old? Why daub them all over, from end to end, with one mass of black? And why build upon them all sorts of ugly hurricane houses, or rig out strange-looking cranes of different shapes and sizes, too often implying, by the negligence in their appearance, anything but good order or sound economy within? I am quite sure that, with a very little trouble, and at no great cost, all these hulks might be made not only respectable-looking, but really handsome objects. The saving would likewise be considerable in the long-run; for the people would take much better care of vessels which seemed worth taking care of, than of those which the owners appeared to consider worthless. Besides which, the men, when transhipped from their own vessel, would feel that they were still on board a man-of-war, and consequently be less disposed to depart from their wonted habits of subordination. But in these hulks, as they are at present constituted, it is by no means easy to maintain unbroken the delicate chain of good discipline, so material a part of whose strength lies beyond the control of formal regulations, and depends for its efficiency mainly on opinion, association, and habit.

Be this as it may, the officers of the newly commissioned ship take possession of the hulk assigned them, the purser gets from the victualling-office provisions enough for present use, and draws from the same quarter a quantity of slop clothing, as well as bedding and haversacks, for the marines, who are generally the first men on board. They are supplied by the boatswain with hammocks, and thus the Jollies soon feel themselves at home. The captain's clerk having prepared what is called an "open list," he enters the names of the officers and men as fast as they arrive. Hammocks and bedding, as well as blankets and shoes, are issued to those sailors who may come on board without any kit, which is too often the case. The senior lieutenant ought, if possible, to be one of the very first persons who joins, and the sooner he establishes himself on board the hulk the better. The marines, being a standing portion of the service, are always ready, and, if necessary, they may be sent on board at a few hours' warning. On this account, as well as many others, they are a most invaluable body of men. When there is no particular hurry, however, they will be embarked in two or three days at the furthest from the time they receive orders. Application should also be made for boys, who are supplied as soon as possible; a certain number being sent from the flagship, while the remainder are enlisted from the shore. A boat's crew of sailors will very soon be picked up from the stray hands lounging about the Common Hard and Jack's other well-known haunts.

Thus, in a very few days, the foundation of a ship's company is laid; and under good management, with a little patience and cheerfulness, the superstructure will advance rapidly. A rendezvous should be opened at a public-house in some street frequented by the seamen; and a flag, with the ship's name on it, exposed before the door; while bills, containing the ship and captain's name, should be stuck up and distributed in the proper quarters. If her destination be India, South America, the Mediterranean, or any other favourite station, that circumstance will of course be sufficiently noticed in these cards of invitation. The master-at-arms, the captain's coxswain, or some old and steady hand who has an interest in getting the ship manned, will be usefully employed at the rendezvous, to talk to the sailors as they drop in to consider the *pros* and *cons* of the new enterprise in which they are invited to engage. The captain himself, and the first lieutenant also, will generally find it worth their while to look in occasionally, perhaps periodically, at the rendezvous, ostensibly to speak on some business, but chiefly to show themselves, and, by a word or two of encouragement, to decide the waverers. It is of great consequence, on these occasions, to keep clear of anything which, by possibility, can be construed into false pretences; for, to say nothing of the moral impropriety of such enticements, their impolicy very soon betrays itself, and when the men detect the fallacy, the result shows itself in the paucity of volunteers. The truth is, Jack, with all his vagaries, possesses a quick discernment in such matters, and is very seldom deceived by chaff. It will seldom, if ever, retard the proper manning of a ship to be very fastidious in choosing amongst the volunteers who offer. The best men will not enter for a ship where sailors are received indiscriminately; and the lower order of mere working hands are easily picked up to complete the crew.

The men are always carefully examined by the surgeon before being received; but it would not be a bad rule that no volunteer should be finally entered until he has been seen and approved of by both captain and first lieutenant. It is, indeed, of great consequence to the eventual comfort of the ship, which always turns upon her good and consistent discipline, that the first lieutenant and captain should be cordially agreed on so material a point as the choice of the individual seamen forming the crew. Every one, indeed, will understand the importance of the captain and first lieutenant being on good terms; but there are very many officers who admit this in words, and even

in sentiment, who have by no means sufficient resolution and self-restraint to carry the precept into practice as they ought to do, and perhaps would do, if they could only be made to see the matter in its true light. In some respects the captain may be compared to a king, and the first lieutenant to his prime minister. One is the nominal, recognised head; the other is the executive chief, the real governor and director of the little state in its daily course of proceedings. The relative duties of king and minister, or captain and lieutenant, may be ever so well defined by written constitutions and official regulations, without producing good government, unless the true philosophy of command, so to call it, be duly understood and practically exercised by both parties.

In the first place, it requires some strength of mind on the part of the nominal chief to satisfy him that his most legitimate authority, and his own genuine dignity, as well in apparent as in substantial power, consists in co-operating heartily with his executive officer, and in aiding all his operations, without interfering needlessly with him, or wantonly thwarting him. A curious but not very unnatural sort of jealousy, however, seems to lurk in the breast of almost every person at the head of a department. If, as may well happen, and indeed must and ought very often to happen, the executive officer, though junior in rank, is the abler and more experienced man of the two, in the technical details of the work to be executed, the chief may occasionally feel uncomfortable at the obvious superiority of his assistant. But how is this unworthy feeling to be managed? How ought it to be managed? To get rid of the rivalry altogether, and part company, would be very injudicious, though I have known such silly things done. On the other hand, for the chief to attempt to diminish the mortifying inequality by preventing his officer from acting freely, is quite as bad in practice, and more despicable in principle, though I am afraid it is a method too often resorted to by weak-minded commanding officers.

On this subject a good deal might be said; but I shall confine myself at present to one consideration, which relates to the duties of a captain in fitting out a ship. As it is drawn, however, from those general principles upon which the science of discipline depends, it will be found applicable, more or less, to the duties of any charge where the principal authority cannot carry on the details without the assistance of subordinate officers.

During the short visits which the captain pays to his ship when she is in harbour, he will seldom find it useful to supplant, as it were, the zeal of his first lieutenant, by taking upon himself the conduct of the ship's detailed operations. The peculiar duties of the captain, when his ship is fitting out, necessarily require him to be absent from her every day during a considerable portion of the working hours. He has to wait on the admiral to receive fresh instructions; he has to carry on a correspondence with the Admiralty on the various equipments of the ship; he has representations and applications to make to the port-admiral, respecting officers and men, and to the admiral superintendant of the dock-yard, respecting stores; for he must never take it for granted that the subordinate authorities at the dock-yard, the victualling-office, or the gun-wharf, are all proceeding in the exact manner in which he wishes, and fancies he is entitled to expect. If he is sincerely desirous that his ship should be expeditiously and well supplied, he must constantly devote a great share of his time and personal exertions to visit all those places, and to let it be seen and felt that he really understands how things ought to be done, and that he is noting their progress. In short, whether at the rendezvous, at the dock-yard, at the admiral's office, or at his own desk in his lodgings, the captain will generally find ample employment on shore for most of the best hours of his day, in really co-operating with his first lieutenant afloat, by seeing those duties properly executed which lie beyond that officer's reach. If these multifarious and important obligations, out of the ship, be fully complied with by the captain, he will seldom have more time left than is barely necessary to go on board—to see what is doing—to learn what has been done—and to give his orders, in a general way, to the first lieutenant, for his further guidance. If, however, during the hour or two that he is afloat, he chooses to carry on the details of the ship's duty, he will often, I fear, interrupt and retard, instead of advancing the service. Officers of experience generally become well aware of the inconvenience of such interference; and knowing its actual injury, not only to the progress of the work in hand, but to the general cause of discipline, and knowing also the irritation which it occasionally produces, they very seldom supersede the authority of the executive officers, even when certain that they could direct matters somewhat better. Independently of the evils which always spring from divided responsibility and divided credit, it is obvious that more mischief must always arise from the absence of uniformity in the conduct of affairs than can be repaired by any occasional superiority in the management of some particular points of the duty. This holds good even when the captain is decidedly the abler man of the two; but when a weak or imperfectly informed person holds the chief authority, he is very apt to catch a new idea from what is passing before him, and, being delighted with his accidental acquisition, he cannot let the opportunity pass of displaying his new-found knowledge.

This unworthy course is also sometimes followed by those who are so conscious of inferiority, that, unless they are eternally fussing and interfering, they suspect the persons under them may possibly question their competency to fill the official station in which they are placed. They draw as largely, therefore, as they can upon the small stock of knowledge which they have acquired in subordinate walks of the profession, and make a vast parade with little solid learning. Be the motive, however, what it may, jealousy, or vanity, or mere fidget, it matters not much—the result is invariably hurtful to good order on board ship. It naturally provokes the indignation of the executive officer who knows his duty well, and feels that he has been doing what is correct; and it excites no respect in the men, whose attention is drawn to the incongruity of the captain doing an officer's work; while it plainly interferes with the time and attention which the captain ought to give to matters of a different stamp, and which if he neglects, no one can do for him.

As a captain has not always the choice of his first lieutenant, on foreign stations especially, it may sometimes happen that a person unfit to fulfil the duties of that office will be appointed. Filling this station well implies not only knowledge and talents, but a disposition to enter cordially into the views of the captain, as well with regard to the general system of discipline, as to all the details of managing the ship. When an unfit person is appointed, it is much better for the lieutenant, as well as the captain, that they should part; and certainly this is more conducive to the discipline of the ship, and therefore to the good of the service, than if they went on for ever like cat and dog. This, indeed, is so well understood, that the Admiralty throw no obstacles in the way of officers exchanging. But an over laxity in this matter is to be avoided, since it has occasionally been made the means of continuing officers in the service, who ought perhaps to have been dismissed, for offences committed under an easy-tempered and placable commander.

In case the unfitness of the first lieutenant arises from absolute incompetence or negligence of his duties, it will soon appear in some palpable instance, for which he must be accountable before a court-martial, unless his captain permit him to quit the ship to avoid that alternative. On the other hand, it will sometimes happen, that an officer who is both competent and zealous, is rather too fond of having his own way, and interpreting the rules and customs of the service in his own particular fashion, in opposition to the views of the captain. This pertinacity detracts from his efficiency as an officer, and more particularly from his fitness for the arduous and delicate situation of first lieutenant, by preventing the establishment of a hearty co-operation with his superior. But if the considerate line of conduct before suggested be acted upon by the captain, unless the lieutenant be a very pig-headed person, who mistakes opposition for zeal, he will readily see that the true way of forwarding the service is to enter heartily, cheerfully, and attentively, into the peculiar plans of his chief. If he does not do this, he will only find his duties become more and more irksome to himself, and all his zeal will often be thrown away in ineffectual efforts.

When a ship is fairly commissioned, the first proceedings of the captain, in respect to her equipment, must be determined by the particular state in which she happens to be. The ship may be in dock, or in the basin, or riding at the moorings—masted, or unmasted; she may have only just been launched, or may have been "paid off all standing." In any case, one of the first points to be attended to is the stowage of the ballast. If the ship has been in commission before, a record of her sailing qualities, and the plan of stowage which was found to answer best, will be supplied by the superintendant of the dock-yard, together with her draught of water, forward and aft, light as launched and in ballast; and, lastly, when completely equipped for sea, with guns, powder, provisions, and men on board. If the ship be new, the captain will be furnished by the Surveyor of the Navy with every particular respecting her trim, and the manner in which he conceives her hold should be stowed. If this very important part of the ship's economy be one that has occupied its due share of the commanding-officer's attention, he will carefully examine the conformation of the ship's bottom, and be enabled to tell whether or not the former plan of stowing the ballast agrees with his own theoretical views, and his experience in such matters, and then putting the ship's recorded sailing qualities by the side of these actual observations, he will be enabled to decide how the ballast shall be distributed.

The Signal Books, Printed Naval Instructions, the Admiralty Statutes, and other works of reference and guidance, are supplied by the port-admiral, while a copy of all the Port Regulations and Orders should be made without loss of time, and be so carefully perused by the captain and officers as to be almost got by heart. A minute attention, indeed, to the injunctions contained in these written orders, is absolutely necessary towards keeping the officers of a ship out of eternal hot water with admiral, flag-captain, secretary, and first lieutenant of the flag-ship, all of whom are put out of their way by the neglect of an officer fitting or refitting a ship.

I remember once a grand row which I, in common with three or four other commanding officers, got into. A signal was made, from the flag-ship at Spithead, the Royal William, or the Royal Billy as she was universally called—the dear old Royal Billy! who can forget her? The order was, "The ships at Spithead are to send boats to assist the vessel in distress." On looking round, we could see nothing but a collier aground on the end of the spit. One boat, or perhaps two, were sent from some of the ships—but not enough to save her; so poor Jock lay on the shoal till he capsised, and there was an end of him; for it came on to blow, and the shore, from South Sea Castle to Blackhouse Point, was a complete beach of coal shingle. Next morning out came a swinging reprimand to all of us, ordering a "report in writing to be made forthwith of the reasons why the signal made at four P.M. to send boats to the collier had not been obeyed."

I recommend folks fitting out, therefore, as they value their peace, to trifle with anything rather than the port orders. For it is well to consider, that a scold resembles a snow-ball—it always gathers weight as it rolls along. Thus the Admiralty send down, by post or by telegraph, a rap on the knuckles to the old admiral—very moderate as naval things go, but such as, in civil life, would make a sober citizen frantic, though it merely squeezes out a growl from the venerable commander-in-chief. Straightway he rings for the secretary, and issues a smartish general order, in which the wretched captain of the offending ship catches the reprimand, with a most usurious allowance of interest. Off goes the said skipper to his ship, in a great fume and hurry, carrying a whole sail in the gig, though on ordinary occasions he chooses to have a reef in. Souse comes the wigging on the hapless first lieutenant; and he, in turn, only waits till the captain goes below, that he may open a volcano of reproaches on the long-suffering middies, who, though they probably now hear of the offence for the first time, know much better than to make any reply.

Such is naval discipline!—a strange mixture of justice and injustice—severity and indulgence—

frankness and wrong-headedness—encouragement and unfair dealing; but still we may be sure, that talents, industry, perseverance, and, above all, resolute cheerfulness, with an absence of the litigious habit of self-justification, must either ensure success and happiness, or give the best chance for them, in spite of scrapes and scolds.

The first lieutenant of the ship fitting out will do well to have by him a sheet of paper, ruled according to the following scheme, or any other tabular form, in which he may insert the names of the men who enter, that he may form some idea, when he comes to station them, what part of the ship each is fit for.

List of Volunteers for His Majesty's Ship Conway.

Name.	Age.	No. of Years		In last Ship.		What Trade or Handicraft besides a Sailor.	Where born, or where belonging.	Remarks, &c.
		At Sea.	In the Navy.	Where stationed.	In what Boat.			
Peter Yeo	30	—	16	Bs. Mate	—	None	Cornwall	Bred in the Navy.
Pat. Murphy	21	2	—	Ordy.	Launch	Tailor	Dublin	A voyage to India.
John Wilson	36	18	14	F. Castle	All Boats	Sail-maker	Lewis	——
A. Jamieson	29	16	10	Fore Top	Cutter	Baker	Alloa	——
Ed. Roberts	36	—	5	Butcher	—	Butcher	Derby	Once a prize-fighter.

A watch bill should be commenced at once; and the men, as fast as they come on board, appointed, as near as may be, to the stations which the officers think they will ultimately occupy. This lets a man know at once what duty he will be required to perform, and makes him feel at home. Some crack sailors will not volunteer unless they can be made reasonably sure of being placed in a station they like; and although it would be highly injudicious to make such absolute stipulations without some previous trial of the candidate's abilities, it may be of great advantage to the service to enter men more or less on this principle. For instance, it is of the utmost importance to obtain steady petty officers, that is to say, quarter-master's, gunner's, boatswain's, and carpenter's mates; captains of the forecastle, the hold, and the tops; sail-makers, armourers, caulkers, and coopers; with others of less consequence, but all valuable in their respective departments, and contributing to make up the singular population of a man-of-war. The following list contains the peace establishment of the Conway, a ship of twenty-eight guns, which I fitted out in the beginning of 1820. The document may perhaps interest persons who like to inquire into the details of a community and ménage so differently constructed from any they are likely to meet with elsewhere.

A Scheme of the Establishment of His Majesty's Ship Conway, with a Complement of 125 men.

Captain	1	Brought forward	23
Lieutenants	3	Carpenter's Mate	1
Master	1	Gunner's Mate	1
Second Master	1	Boatswain's Mates	2
Purser	1	Quarter-masters	3
Surgeon	1	Captain's Coxswain	1
Boatswain	1	Capts. of the Forecastle	2
Gunner	1	Cooper	1
Carpenter	1	Captains of the Foretop	2
Master's Mate	1	———— Maintop	2
Midshipmen	4	———— Afterguard	1
Assistant Surgeon	1	———— Mast	1
Clerk	1	Ship's Cook	1
Schoolmaster	1	Volunteers, First Class	3
Master at Arms	1	Gunner's Crew	5
Caulker	1	Carpenter's Crew	4
Armourer	1	Sailmaker's Crew	1
Sailmaker	1	Gunner's Yeoman	1
		Boatswain's ditto	1
Carry forward	23	Carry forward	56

Brought forward	56	Brought forward	63
Carpenter's ditto	1	Gun-room Cook	1
Cook's Mate	1	Steward's Mate	1
Barber	1	Able Seamen	29
Purser's Steward	1	Ordinary Seamen	
Captain's Steward	1	Landmen	
Captain's Cook	1	Boys, Second Class	5
Gun-room Steward	1	—— Third Class	5
	—	Widows' Men	3
Carry forward	63		107
Marines:—1 Lieutenant; 1 Serjeant; 1 Corporal; 1 Drummer; 14 Privates			18
		Total	125

The last odd entry of three widows' men was an official fiction (now abolished) by which the pay of so many imaginary persons was transferred to a fund for the relief of the widows of commissioned and warrant officers. Real men are now allowed in their places.

If any other ship be paying off at the same time, it is well worth trying to get some of her best men to enter for the ship fitting out. People who have been for several years together in a comfortable ship feel unwilling to part, and the prospect of continuing still companions, often influences them to volunteer in considerable numbers, if other circumstances appear suitable. When this takes place, the men generally transfer their whole kit at once, see their names placed on the new ship's books, and obtain what is called "long leave" of absence to visit their friends, after depositing a portion of their ready money in the hands of the commanding-officer until their return. These men almost always form a valuable part of a ship's crew, and, I am convinced, the practice will become more general of removing direct from one man-of-war to another, whenever the system of frequent payments shall be established in the Navy. The sailors will then learn the proper use of money, and will acquire, in consequence, more orderly and decent, and I may say rational habits. At present, Jack generally thinks he can do better by carrying on shore his pocket full of cash—the earnings of several years; and it is seldom, until he has been robbed and stripped by the land-sharks of both sexes, and cast into the kennel, that he thinks of returning to sobriety. It requires, indeed, no great experience of poverty and dissoluteness to make him court

again that wholesome restraint which, while it checks his licentious freedom, recognises and rewards his merits, and affords him, or might, and ought to afford him, as much liberty as the nature of the profession he has chosen renders possible.

By these and other means, if the captain and officers be at all popular in their manners, or be known favourably in the service, or if even without these advantages, the intended station to which the ship is going be a favourite one, and ordinary pains be taken at the rendezvous, the ship's company soon begins to assume a respectable and business-like appearance. It then becomes of infinite importance, that the first lieutenant should introduce a uniform and well-explained system of discipline on board, especially as regards cleanliness and neatness of appearance, which are best effected by frequent and regular musterings, without too much fastidiousness in the first instance, as this might only tease the men, and prevent the effectual establishment of those observances which it is the chief purpose of good discipline to render habitual. Great efforts should always be made to give to Sunday its true character of a day of piety, repose, and reflection ; and in the weekly mustering, in particular, a good deal may generally be accomplished towards imparting to the ship and crew the appearance of order and even elegance, which in times more advanced ought to characterise them during the whole week. The stock of clothes amongst the men will, it is true, generally be scanty at first, but a portion of it may, with proper management, be always kept clean, and a well-bleached shirt and trousers, with a good scrape of the chin, and a thorough scrubbing from top to toe, render poor Jack's toilet, if not the most refined in the world, certainly very effectual towards its purpose. I have often been amused to see the merry style in which they employed great lumps of coarse soap and hard brushes, in vain endeavours to remove the umber tints of tar from their hands, and the tanning of the sunshine from their brawny arms. These indelible distinctions of their hard service, are rendered more striking at such moments by their contrast with the firm and healthy whiteness of the skin round their shoulders and chest.

An officer must be cautious how he issues slop clothing to newly entered men, who have no pay due ; and a sharp, but reserved look-out ought to be kept on any suspicious characters as they go over the side on leave, for there will ever be found at the great naval stations a certain number of regular-built swindlers, who wander from port to port expressly to pilfer. These vagabonds enter on board newly commissioned ships, make a great show of activity, and remain a certain time to lull suspicion. They then take up slops, that is, obtain from the purser as many shirts, trousers, shoes, and other articles, as they can persuade the commanding-officer they are in want of ; after which they desert upon the first opportunity, only to run the same rig in some other ship. When a character of this kind is caught in the act of making off with his own or his messmate's blanket, it is best to let him go on shore (minus the blanket, of course), and the chances are he will not return again. You lose the man, doubtless, but, like Dogberry, you may "thank God you are rid of a knave."

In the treatment of the men at this stage of a ship's fitting out, a good deal of discretion is necessary. If the reins of discipline be held too tightly, the young crew are apt to become restive ; and if severe means are then resorted to in order to establish authority, the accession of fresh hands is apt to be seriously checked, although nothing may have been done which, with a little more time, might not have been gradually and usefully adopted. On the other hand, if there be too much laxity in the system, all experience proves that disorder will soon follow, chiefly, I believe, from the unequal pressure of the work on those shoulders which are willing to bear it, to the obvious encouragement of the indolence of those whom nothing but good order and close superintendence will keep usefully employed.

It is a fatal error in an officer to court popularity by unworthy means, or indeed by any means, except those of fair-dealing and strict propriety, equal justice to all, and as much indulgence as the nature of the service will admit of. But, at the same time, great advantage may be taken of accidental opportunities of putting the people into good-humour during an outfit ; and by indulging them in a jollification, we may occasionally give them something to think of at the moment, and for weeks afterwards.

When I was fitting out his Majesty's sloop Lyra at Deptford, in 1815, to accompany the embassy to China, under Lord Amherst, it occurred to me one cold morning, the 24th of December, that it might not have a bad effect on the good name of my pretty little craft, if I gave the ship's company a regular blow-out the next day. I communicated this idea to the first lieutenant, who, seeing no objection, sent for some of the leading men, and said each mess was to have a goose and a turkey for their Christmas dinner. My steward was then told to arrange the details ; and presently he came to report, that the men had taken it into their heads, that as the best poultry was to be procured in London, they should like exceedingly to be allowed to despatch an embassy to Leadenhall Market for that purpose. Of course the first lieutenant agreed also to this, and two seamen and one marine were forthwith landed at Deptford to execute the mission. A cart being hired, off they set, returning before sunset, with as noisy a cargo as ever I saw packed together. It so happened, that while we lay on one side of the hulk—I forget her name, another ship was lashed on the opposite side for some temporary purpose. The crew of our neighbour dined on Christmas day on soup and beef as usual, and remained contented enough till some of our fellows, waddling under the effects of double allowance of solids, and perhaps with a trifle too much of fluids, came singing and capering along the deck of their hulk. In the most good-humoured way possible, they asked their neighbours how many geese and turkeys they had discussed that day. The meagre answer called forth shouts of merriment, and the poor fellows belonging to the other ship were rather unhandsomely taunted with the scantiness of their Christmas fare. "Look at that and weep, you hungry-faced rascals!" exclaimed one of our jolly blades, holding up the drumstick of a goose in one hand and that of a turkey in the other. He was answered by the practical joke of having the two

bones twisted from his hands and shyed in his face, according to the most approved fashion of tarpaulin manners. This was the signal for a general mêlée, and the officers had enough to do to separate the contending hosts.

A few days before the next Christmas day came round, when we were lying in the River Canton in China, my steward came to me and said—

"The people, sir, have been talking for the last two or three weeks of hardly anything else but the 'row' at Deptford this time twelvemonth, when you gave them a feast on Christmas day."

"Well—what of that?"

"Oh, nothing, sir; I only thought you might like to know it. There are plenty of ducks and geese at the Chinese village close to us."

I seized the idea in a moment; and having, as before, consulted with the first lieutenant, I bade my steward prepare a good stock accordingly. I took no further charge of the matter; nor did I expect to hear anything more of the dinner or its preparations. In this, however, I was deceived; for when daylight appeared on Christmas morning of 1816, such a racket was heard from our little vessel as brought up all hands on board every one of the ten or a dozen huge East India Company's ships amongst which we were anchored, at a place called Second Bar. Our fellows had carried the whole of their Christmas poultry aloft, and having perched themselves at the yard-arms and on the cross-trees, gaff and flying jib-boom ends, they made each of the wretched birds fast with a string six or eight feet long, in such a manner that they could flap their wings, but could not escape. The great difficulty, as I afterwards learned, was how to keep the ducks and geese from making a noise till the proper moment arrived, and this was not effected without sundry bites and scratches. As soon as broad daylight came, the word was given, and the whole flock being dropped to the full length of their lines, they set up such a screaming, cackling, and flapping, as could not fail, when aided by the mingled laughter and shouts of their future demolishers, to call the envious attention of the whole surrounding fleet!

It is very useful to keep the people in a good humour, not only when fitting out, but at all times; though, as I have already suggested, great care must be taken, especially by the captain, to avoid even the appearance of courting popularity at the expense of his officers. Such an unworthy course of proceeding strikes at the root of discipline, or, to use a more correct figure, it lops away its branches, and is sure to extend its withering influence over the whole. Mutual confidence between the leading authorities of a ship is quite essential to obedience and good order throughout; and as not only the subordinate officers, but the seamen themselves, down to the cook's mate, possess a quickness of perception for such things, which no false pretensions of confidence, no attention to forms, can hide, it becomes the captain's duty rather to incur occasional odium in defence of his first lieutenant, than shabbily to steal popularity from him.

A truly right-minded officer, therefore, at the head of any department, whether it be that of a ship, a fleet, an army, or a cabinet, will seldom, if ever, take into his calculations the effect which any measure is to produce on himself or his own selfish interests—but will steadily seek to discover what is best for the public service. And if such research be made in the proper spirit of generous self-devotion to his duty, it will not unfrequently happen that he may essentially advance the cause of good discipline, by transferring the credit of success, which technically might be his own due, to those with whom he happens to be co-operating, and without whose companionship and industrious attention to details, though unseen and unknown to the world, he might never have gained his point. It is more difficult, indeed, but still more generous, and proportionably more useful in practice, for the chief to bear manfully the brunt of failure; and in seasons when measures of an unpopular character become necessary, to charge himself with a large share of that loss of favour which he is best able to afford.

It is easy to write about such precepts—very hard to exercise them; but universal experience seems to prove, that they form by far the most certain and least fragile ties by which the marvellous frame-work of human government is knit together, in all its branches, civil, military, and domestic.

CHAPTER XX.

FITTING OUT.

In the course of a week or ten days after a ship is commissioned, the officers are collected on board their hulk, and they bestir themselves to gather their comforts about them. In the first instance they look after their "noble selves," by selecting, at some small salary extra per month, a boy or a marine a-piece, for a valet, to brush their clothes and polish their boots. They next find out a good steward, and having installed him in possession of the nascent stock of gun-room crockery, make him hunt for a cook, generally a black man, who takes into his sable keeping the pots and pans of the growing mess. The mates and mids, a portion of whom are appointed by the Admiralty, and a portion by the captain, gradually make their appearance, and settle into their dungeon of a birth under the caterage of some old boy of a captain's clerk or hard-a-weather mate of the decks. A pretty large proportion of youngsters also, or squeakers, who cannot be appointed without the previous consent of the Admiralty, spring up like mushrooms, with rosy cheeks and tender hands—totally unconscious, poor little fellows! of the rugged lives they are soon to lead. They look about them with an apprehensive smile at the bustle, or start at the harsh sound of orders, whose import, and even words, are as yet strange to their delicate ears.

If these boys had only sense enough to look on quietly, and pay attention to all that is passing, with a sincere desire to understand it, and were they to be assisted a little in their inquiries, they might on such occasions as that of a ship fitting out, manage to learn and store up much that would prove valuable on a future day. But these youths are generally let loose from the Naval College, or from school, or from mama's apron-string; and unless they are looked after and encouraged, they

are too volatile to pay a proper degree of attention to the duty which is going on. In truth, almost the only way to render what is passing useful to them, is to devise methods for turning their services to real account; and, after all, it does not require much ingenuity to arrange this, even at first, provided their numbers be not so great that they stand in one another's way. Three or four youngsters, even though absolute novices, might always be kept well employed in a sloop of war, and perhaps twice that number in a frigate or line-of-battle ship fitting. At present, however, and generally speaking, in peace time, it will happen that the crowd of young gentlemen is so great, and the disposition to learn so little diffused amongst them, that the first lieutenant is often glad to get rid of them altogether by letting them waste their time and money on shore.

Much has been written and said of the dissolute manners of the men and officers in the hulk of a ship fitting out; but there appears to me little more foundation for these charges, than belongs to similar accusations against ships otherwise situated. There exist equal means in the hulk as on board the ship for maintaining good order; and if these be not exerted, the fault lies with the particular commanding-officer, not with the situation.

The state in which the ship happens to be at the time she is commissioned, must decide, as I said before, the course to be followed in her equipment. If she be already masted and alongside the hulk, and the ballast in, the officer will most likely wish to make some show in the way of rigging—for as yet the masts are naked to the girt-lines, or single ropes rove through blocks at the mast-head, by which first the men and then the shrouds are drawn up, and the eyes of the rigging placed over the mast-heads. If there be only a few sailors on board, these can be employed to get off the furniture—that is, all the blocks, ready stropped in the rigging-loft; and to draw the present use stores from the dock-yard. These can all be kept under lock and key in the store-rooms of the hulk; and if the rigging, and everything required in placing it aloft, be previously fitted and arranged by the boatswain, so that he can put his hand at once on the gear as soon as a sufficient number of the crew join, much time will be saved. Even the lower rigging may be got off all ready fitted from the loft; while the runners and tackles, the luffs, and other purchases, may be put in preparation for use the moment there are hands enough to employ them.

By application to the boatswain of the yard, assistance will be given to gammon the bowsprit, preparatory to its being clothed, which is the technical term for rigging that important spar. The operation of gammoning, in which the marines can take an active part, by heaving at the capstan, I am not very sure if I can describe in a manner intelligible to shore-going folks.

Every one knows, however, what the bowsprit is; and those who are most observant, will have discovered that one of its principal offices is to support the foremast and foretopmast, by means of their stays, as the slanting ropes are called which stretch forwards and downwards from the head of every mast, great and small, in the ship. Some of these, as the main-stay, lie at so inconsiderable an angle with the horizon, that they possess great power of sustaining the mast; while others, such as the fore-stay, being necessarily more perpendicular, do not act to such good mechanical purpose. There is a peculiar disadvantage attending the method of securing the fore-stay, arising from the position of the mast. It is placed so near the extremity of the ship, that the stay, which forms its only support in the forward direction, cannot be attached to the body of the vessel, without making so very small an angle with the mast as would divest it of nearly all its character as a supporter. To remedy this, the bowsprit has been devised, chiefly, I have no doubt, as an out-rigger for the fore-stay. But in order to render the spar effective for that purpose, it requires to be very strongly bound down. There has, therefore, been contrived what is called the stem, or cut-water, which is a strong but narrow projection from the bows, securely fastened by long and thick bolts of iron and copper to the body of the ship. The chief purpose of this stem is to furnish a point of support for the ropes securing the bowsprit. Of these, the most important is called the gammoning, which consists of a strong and well-stretched hawser, passed up and down successively, in perpendicular turns, over the bowsprit and through a hole horizontally cut in the stem. At each turn the gammoning hawser is hove taut, while every effort is used to bring the bowsprit down into its place. A heavy boat is sometimes suspended from the end, the weight of which greatly assists the gammoning process. Another set of ropes, called bob-stays, extending from about one-third from the outer end of the bowsprit to the cut-water, nearly at the water-line, contribute essentially to its stability. It is further secured in a lateral direction by shrouds reaching from its extremity to the bows of the ship.

I need not mention, that in order to give a finish, as it were, to the end of the ship, and to convert that into a source of ornament which might otherwise be deemed a deformity, the top of the stem has been appropriated as the position of the figure-head, the characteristic emblem of the vessel. In some ships the sailors pride themselves especially on the beauty of their figure-head; and many a time I have seen the captain of the forecastle employed for hours in painting the eyes, hair, and drapery of his favourite idol. I suppose few commanding-officers will allow of this liberty; for it must be owned that as Jack's taste in female beauty, and in the disposition and colours of dress, are borrowed from a very questionable source, where the naked truth, as it is called, predominates sadly over the beau-idéal, his labours in adorning the figure-head are apt to produce strange monsters. I once heard of a captain who indulged his boatswain in this whim of representing his absent love as far as the king's allowance of paint could carry the art; and it must be owned, that as the original Dulcinea owed her roses to the same source, the representation "came very close aboard of the original," as the delighted boatswain expressed it. This very proximity in colouring, scantiness of drapery, and so forth, which formed the boatswain's pride, perplexed the worthy captain, who had given his sanction to the work, for he could never cross the bows of his own ship with a party of friends, without raising a

laugh at the expense of his taste in figures. The whole crew, however, soon fell as much in love with the damsel as the boatswain had done before them; and it would have been cruel to have sent the painter to daub her ladyship all over with one uniform colour, according to the general fashion. The considerate commander took a different line.

"You seem proud of your head, Mr. Clearpipe, I shall gild her for you!"

In a few days, the sparkling eyes and blushing cheeks of Mrs. Boatswain, like Danäe, had yielded up their charms to the golden shower. The glittering figure-head soon became the delight of the ship's company, and, on one occasion, furnished the captain with rather an odd means of calling out their energies. The ship was sailing in company with several others of the same class, and when they all came to reef topsails together, she was beat on the first occasion. As they were setting about a second trial of activity, the captain called out to the people aloft—

"Now, I tell you what it is, my lads, unless you are off the yards, and the sails are hoisted again before any other ship in the squadron, by the Lord Harry I'll paint your figure-head black!" From that time forward, she beat every ship in the fleet.

As soon as a sufficient number of hands are collected on board the ship which is fitting out, all the spars, except the spare ones, may be got off to the hulk. These consist of topsail-yards, topmasts, and topgallant masts and yards, jib and spanker boom, studding-sail booms, and one or two others. The lower and topsail-yards can be fitted on the hulk's decks, ready to be swayed into their places when the masts are in a state to receive them. If a dockyard lump, or lighter, can be got to put all the spars in, together with the tops and other things which are usually made into a raft and floated off, it may save a great deal of trouble; as it frequently happens that they cannot all be got in before night, and if bad weather comes on, they may break adrift and be lost.

There seems no fixed rule for rigging a ship progressively. Different officers adopt different ways of setting about this operation, and slight varieties occur in the arrangement of the ropes; but, generally speaking, everything is disposed according to the long-established rules of seamanship, and it all comes nearly to the same at last. I could hardly hope to make the details of rigging a ship intelligible to landsmen. It may, however, be said, that the grand object is to support each mast laterally by a number of shrouds on each side, inclining slightly abaft the perpendicular, to prevent its falling either sideways or forwards, and also, by means of two stays, the principal stay and the spring stay, both stretching in the line of the keel, to hold it forwards. The width of the ship affords what is called a spread for the rigging, which spread is augmented by the application of broad shelves, called channels, carrying the rigging three or four feet further out on each side, and making its angle with the mast greater, and consequently increasing the support of the shrouds. These channels act merely as out-riggers, for the ultimate point of fixture, or that against which the shrouds pull, is lower down, where long links of iron, called chain-plates, are securely bolted through and through the solid ribs of the ship, and riveted within. The upper ends of these chain-plates are furnished with what are called dead-eyes, great round blocks of wood pierced with holes, through which the lanyards are rove by which the rigging is set up, or drawn almost as tight as bars of iron. The topmasts, rising immediately above the lower masts, are supported chiefly by rigging spread out by the tops, or what people on shore miscall round-tops. These, like the channels for the lower rigging, are mere projections or out-riggers; the true point of support for the topmast rigging is the lower shrouds, the connexion being made by what are called futtock shrouds and catharpins. The top-gallant masts, at the next stage aloft, are supported by shrouds passing through the ends of small spars called cross-trees, at the head of the topmast; and so on in succession, up to the sky-scrapers and moon-rakers in some very fly-away ships.

As early as possible, the boats, which are duly warranted for the ship, should be selected, and their equipment superintended, or occasionally looked at by the officers of the ship, who are the persons most interested in their completion. The master boat-builder will generally attend to any little extra fittings that the first lieutenant may have a fancy for—such as the arrangement of the kedge and steam-anchor davits, the slide for the carronade in the launch, and so on. The boats will be painted of any required colour, provided that colour be consistent with the dock-yard regulations; if any other be required, the captain must purchase it himself, but the dock-yard painters will lay it on. In the same way, if the gun carriages are to be painted of any particular or fancy colour, the people at the gun-wharf will prime them in a manner suited to that colour, but no more.

I may here take occasion to remark, that in the numberless dock-yards I have drawn stores from, or at which I have fitted out, or paid off, or re-equipped ships, I never met with any real difficulty in getting all that was reasonable from the officers in any department. I have heard, indeed, one and all of these persons abused over and over again, for being crusty and disobliging; for pertinacity in sticking to the mere letter of their instructions, and forgetting its spirit; and for throwing obstacles in the way of the service, instead of promoting its advancement. But I can only say for myself, and for others who I know to have adopted the same plan, that I never met with anything but a hearty zeal to furnish all that was right, and that too in the pleasantest manner, provided the proper degree of civility were used in making the application.

People too often forget, that politeness, punctuality, and general attention to business, are all reciprocal qualities; and that, unless they themselves employ such means in their intercourse with official authorities, it is hopeless to expect these authorities will put themselves one inch out of their way to oblige persons who manifestly hold them in contempt. In reply to this, I have often heard it asserted, that these officials ought to be made to do their duty equally well to all, and that the idea of being civil to a dock-yard officer, in order to obtain that which is necessary for his

Majesty's service, is absurd. But I have only to say, that until we can procure angels to take the office of master-attendant, master-shipwright, storekeeper, and so forth, the laws and customs of human nature will continue to regulate such influences. Your gruff and sulky letter-of-the-law man will, no doubt, get his ship fitted, in process of time, but not half so well, nor nearly so quickly, as he who takes matters cheerfully, and understands the art of receiving what he is officially entitled to, more or less as if it were a personal favour done to himself.

When a sufficient number of hands have been volunteered at the rendezvous, and stationed to the different parts of the ship's duty, the first lieutenant should form them into separate working parties, as carefully selected as possible for the different kinds of work required. The gunner will carry one of these gangs of hands to the ordnance-wharf, to fit the tackles and breechings: another party will be sent to the sail-loft to fit the sails: a third may be occupied with stowing the water-tanks, and preparing the holds for the provisions: while some hands should be sent to weave mats for covering the different parts of the rigging. The carpenters form a most important department of the crew, as there are many little jobs to be attended to in every part of the ship which the dock-yard pass over; and it is useful to have one or two carpenters always ready at a call to drive in a nail here, or fix a cleat there, or to ease or fill up what does not fit nicely.

When a ship is first commissioned, the captain should apply to the builder to have the caulking of the sides, and especially of the decks, carefully examined, and if this important operation is to be repeated, it should be got over as soon as may be. If the caulking be delayed, as too frequently occurs, till after the ship is equipped and painted, and the guns mounted, off comes a noisy gang of caulkers, who daub her all over with pitch, the removal of which is a troublesome, and always a dirty operation.

Old hammocks are generally supplied for the men to sleep in while the ship is fitting, and returned when she goes out of harbour. But two sets of new hammocks ought to be got on board the hulk, ready to be numbered as soon as a neat-handed man of letters can be enlisted for that purpose; and, as every hammock requires to have a legible number marked on it, this occupies some time, and should be set about as early as possible, that all may be dry and ready against going to sea.

If the ship be new, it will be of great advantage that the captain or first lieutenant should point out to the dock-yard officers what he considers the best place for the bulk-heads, or partitions separating the different holds from one another. The main hold, for example, if fitted strictly according to rule, or if it be left to the general guess of the superintending shipwright, may chance to be long enough to stow a certain number of water-tanks, together with a foot or two over and above; now this lost space, if thrown into the after-hold, might prove sufficient to gain another entire "longer," or range of provision-casks. In the same way, the bulk-head which is common to the spirit-room and after-hold, may, by timely adjustment, be so placed as to gain much useful space. These things, I believe, are now much more attended to than formerly in the original fitting of the ship; but I mention them to prevent, as far as may be, the dangerous practice of taking that for granted which admits of further examination. Moreover, as no two vessels are exactly alike in all their dimensions, and correct seamanship is guided by principles which an officer ought to understand, it will not do to rely upon things being done properly when they are done by rule-of-thumb. Thus the position of the main-tack block, and those of the fore and main sheets, the main-brace blocks, topsail sheet and brace bitts, with the number of sheeves in each, and twenty other things relating to kevils, cleats, and belaying pins, will be dependent for much of their eventual efficiency on the length of the yards, the size of the sails, and other circumstances which it is quite in vain, and quite unreasonable to expect the dock-yard workmen to take into account.

By the time the dear little barky, to which every one has ere this become attached, is so far advanced as to have all her spars on end, the artificers will have completed their hammerings, sawings, and nailings, and the main-hold will have been stowed with water-tanks. It is then right to draw the heavy stores from the dock-yard, such as anchors, cables, spare anchor-stocks, fishes for the lower masts, and other spars, forming, when packed together in two lines, one on each side of the upper deck, what are called "the booms." Great care must be taken in stowing these clusters of spars so as to leave room enough between them, and just room enough, for stowing the launch or largest boat. This is managed by the carpenter taking what is called her midship section, and making a slight frame-work model to guide the stowage of the booms.

It may be useful to remark, that although the operations in fitting out a ship are multifarious, and often apparently much confused, it is of great consequence to carry into them as much routine method as possible. For example, in spite of the frequent interruptions to which the seamen are exposed by the arrival of dock-yard and victualling-office vessels, which must be cleared, or by any other cause, it will be found very advantageous to adopt a uniform plan by which one set of men shall begin, carry on, and complete the same jobs. In this way, the several working parties will come to take an interest and pride in executing their tasks well and quickly, which they never could feel if the responsibility and credit were divided or dissipated by their being sent backwards and forwards from one operation to another. For the purpose of such arrangements, as well as to assist his memory, the first lieutenant may find it useful to write out in the evening a programme of the next day's intended operations, and commencing every morning by this, adhere to it throughout the day as strictly as circumstances will permit. A character of consistency will thus be given to a vast crowd of operations which otherwise become confused and desultory. The people employed to execute these tasks will soon insensibly discover that their labours are guided by substantial method, and they will work all the more cheerfully and effectively, from a conviction that no time is lost, and that their services are duly appreciated.

The main hold being now stowed, the cables, anchors, and spare spars, all on board, the quantity of provisions required to complete for the service appointed—three, four, or six months—may be applied for, and will be sent off in the victualling-office lighters. The purser then gets on board a proportionate quantity of coals, candles, lanterns, and other stores in his department. The rigging, we must suppose, has in the mean time been repeatedly set up, and is now so well stretched that it is ready for the last pull before going out of harbour. This done, and the dead-eyes and ratlines squared, the shroud and backstay mats are put on, and the masts and studding-sail booms carefully scraped. The lower masts, and the heads of the topmasts and topgallant masts, are next painted, the yards blacked, and the rigging and backstays fore and aft tarred down. The whole ship ought now to be scraped within and without, and thoroughly cleaned and dried: after which the painters may be sent for from the dock-yard, and when they have primed the ship it will be well to give her decks another good scouring. Next black the bends, while the painters finish the upper-works with one or two more coats; and, finally, retouch the bends with the blacking-brush.

When the paint is thoroughly dry, the guns and ordnance stores are to be got on board, and all the remaining stores drawn from the dock-yard, leaving nothing, if possible, excepting the gunpowder, to be got off at Spithead. At this stage of the equipment, the ropes forming the running rigging may be rove and cut. At the same time, both suits of sails ought to be got on board in a decked lighter, one for stowing away in the sail room, but completely fitted and ready for use; the others to be bent to the yards. The hammock-cloths also being now fitted, are brought off; and if the ship be "going foreign," double sets are allowed, both of which in former times used to be painted; but I understand, the spare cloths are now very properly supplied unpainted.

The ship being all ready for going out of harbour, the captain makes a report to that effect to the admiral, the working boats are returned, and the new ones drawn, and hoisted in. At the same time all unserviceable stores, worn out in fitting the ship, are returned to the dock-yard, including the hulk hammocks, which must be well scrubbed, dried, and made neatly up. The new hammocks are issued and slung, and the bedding being lashed up in them, they are stowed in the nettings, with their numbers ranged in a straight line, in regular order fore and aft. This arrangement not only gives symmetry, but is useful in affording the means of getting at any particular hammock which may be required; for instance, if a man is taken sick, or persons are required to be sent to other ships.

Generally speaking, indeed, it will be found that the attention bestowed on regularity, neatness, and even dandyism, in all these minor details, brings with it more than a correspondent degree of practical advantage. The men soon feel a pride in what their officer approves of and shows himself pleased with; and, when once they fall into habits of mutual obligation, if I may so call the process by which people of all ranks, whether commanding others or acting under authority, co-operate in the accomplishment of a common purpose, every thing goes on smoothly and cheerfully. I need scarcely recal to the recollection of any one who has witnessed the practice of such things, the marvellous difference in the efficiency of a ship where the system of discipline is to bully and reproach, and of another where the principle is encouraging and gentlemanlike. In one case the crew work as little as may be, and even take a morbid pleasure in crossing the views of the officers, as much as they possibly can without incurring the risk of punishment; and they never stir a finger in works not strictly within their assigned duty. In the other case, where good will, a temperate exercise of authority, indulgence, when it can by possibility be granted, and, above all, when no coarse language unworthy the lips of an officer and a gentleman is used, the result is very different. All the subordinate authorities, and indeed the crew at large, then become insensibly possessed of an elasticity of obedience which exerts a two-fold influence, by reacting on themselves even more than it operates upon the commanding-officer whose judicious deportment has called out the exertion. As truly, therefore, may it be said of the quality of cheerfulness in the conduct of discipline, as of mercy, that it is twice blessed, and is equally beneficial to both parties. I may safely add, that in the strict discipline which is absolutely indispensable in every efficient man-of-war, and under all the circumstances of confinement, privation, and other inevitable hardships to which both officers and men are exposed, such a course of moderation and good-breeding, independently of its salutary effect on the minds of the people, works most admirably for the public service, and more than doubles the results, by rendering men, who otherwise might have been disposed to retard the duty, sincerely zealous in its advancement.

Lord Nelson, that great master of war and discipline, and all that was noble and good in the cause of his country, understood, better perhaps than any other officer, the art of applying these wholesome maxims to the practice of duty at the exact moment of need. We all know the results of his system. Would to God we could all learn really to imitate his example, and not only know what is right, but practise what we know!

I remember hearing that once, during the long and weary period when Lord Nelson was blockading Toulon, he was joined from England by a line-of-battle ship, commanded by an officer who, as the story goes, had long applied for and expected an appointment to a cruising frigate, and who, in consequence of this disappointment, came growling out to join the fleet, in high dudgeon with the Admiralty at being condemned, as he called it, to the galley-slave duty of a blockade, in a wretched old tub of a 74, instead of ranging at large in a gay frigate over the Atlantic or the Adriatic, and nabbing up prizes by the dozen. It appears farther, that he rather unreasonably extended a portion of his indignation to the admiral, who, of course, had nothing to do with his appointment; and this sulky frame of mind might have proved the captain's ruin, had his admiral been any other than Nelson. But the genius of that great officer appeared to delight in such occasions of recalling people to a sense of their duty, and directing their passions and motives into the

channels most useful to themselves and their country. His invariable maxim was, that there might be found more good qualities than bad ones in most people, and that there existed scarcely any one who, by proper management, might not be induced to exert himself heartily to some useful public purpose.

Be this, abstractedly, as it may, it is certain that, on the occasion alluded to, Lord Nelson had somehow got notice of the temper which the newcomer had brought with him from home, and he took his wonted line accordingly. Knowing the officer to be a clever man, and capable of performing good service if he chose it, it was Nelson's cue to make it his choice. When, therefore, the captain came on board, full of irritability and provocation, the admiral took no notice, but chatted with him during breakfast on the news from England, and other indifferent matters, as if his guest had been in the best humour possible. The other, who was nursing his displeasure, waited only for an opportunity of exploding, when he could do so without a breach of decorum, or of the official etiquettes of the service. Lord Nelson soon gave him the occasion he appeared to seek for, by begging him to step into the after-cabin, and then asking him what he thought of the station, and how he should like cruising in the Levant and other interesting parts of the Mediterranean.

"Why, as to that, my lord, I am not very likely to have an opportunity of being able to give an answer. I am sent here against my will to join the blockading fleet, and here, no doubt, I am doomed to stick to the end of the chapter. I care nothing about the Mediterranean, and it would matter little if I did."

"I am sorry to hear you speak in that way," said Nelson, "for I had reckoned a good deal on your activity, personal knowledge, and abilities, to have executed a service of some consequence in the upper parts of the station. In this view I have been cutting out a cruise for you, which I had hoped might enable you to see everything that is interesting, and at the same time to execute a delicate and difficult piece of service. But if you really do not fancy it, only say so—it is not a business that can be done well on compulsion, but must be done cheerfully. If you have a mind to go, well and good—if not, I must look out for some one else—but you are the man I should prefer, if it be agreeable to you. Here is a sketch of your orders, and there is the chart—look them over at leisure, and make your decision."

As Lord Nelson spoke these words he went on deck, leaving the poor man bewildered at the prospect of the very employment he most desired, and not a little ashamed of himself for having betrayed that he had anticipated so different a reception.

The rest of the story is equally characteristic. The captain most gratefully accepted the admiral's offer, sailed on the appointed service, which he executed with such diligence and zeal, that he actually returned to the blockading fleet long within the period he was authorised to bestow on the cruise; and there he remained ever afterwards, performing all the drudgery of the blockading service, not only with zeal, but with the heartiest good-humour, springing out of an anxious desire to manifest at once his respect and his affectionate devotion to the matchless officer who had so judiciously taught him the true path to honour.

I should hardly have thought it necessary to point out what is the moral of this story, had I not been asked for it by a most judicious and reflecting person to whom I once related the anecdote, and who remarked that the sulky man got all he asked for. True; he did so; but what did Nelson, and through Nelson the country, get in return? In the first place, the particular service at the outset was well and speedily performed; and in the next, the tedious and harassing duty of blockading was executed with spirit by an officer who, had he not been thus judiciously humoured in a trifle, might, possibly, have imparted a tinge of discontent not only to his own crew, but even to other ships of the fleet. There is but one way of making men exert themselves fully, and that is by making it not only their duty but their pleasure to do their work, as the saying is, "con amore." This, at least, appears to have been the moral of all Nelson's rules.

The last thing to be done in fitting out, and before quitting the harbour, is to turn all hands over to their proper ship, and then to scrape, and scrub, and wash the old hulk as effectually as possible, preparatory to her being inspected by the dock-yard. This duty is too frequently executed in a negligent manner; and really it is not much to be wondered at, for, as I said before, the hulks are such abominable ugly-looking monsters, that one can take no pride or pleasure in treating them with common decency. The commanding officer, therefore, should be particularly cautious in seeing this operation effectually performed; for, if he does not, he will be sure to be called upon next day to send a party of hands, probably at a great inconvenience, to repeat the process.

There are, as will readily be conceived, a hundred minor points to be thought of in the equipment of a ship, to which I have not adverted, relating to the watching, stationing, and quartering of men and officers; the berthing and arrangement of the people into messes; the rules respecting their having leave to go on shore, and so on. It may be well, however, to remind officers that they should never forget that the mere appearance of their ship is a matter of considerable consequence; and therefore, even in the very busiest times of the outfit, the yards should be carefully squared every evening after the work is over, all the ropes hauled taut, and the decks swept as soon as the artificers leave off work. Not a single person beyond the sentries should ever be allowed to go from the hulk to the ship, except during working hours. This rule prevents any interference with the tools or unfinished work of the dock-yard men. In a word, the crew should never be allowed to suppose that the discipline of forms and appearances, so to call it, is relaxed, because the usual regularity of working is in some degree interrupted. That a ship is essentially in good order can at once be discovered by a professional eye, in the midst of her most bustling occupations and at any stage of the outfit.

Last of all, the pilot comes on board; the sails are loosed and hoisted; and the lashings being cast off from the hulk, the gay ship sails joyously out of harbour, and takes up her anchorage at

Spithead. Like bees in a new hive, the officers and crew then set to work in good earnest, in getting things into their places; and being all thoroughly tired of harbour, and anxious to get to sea, a fresh feeling of zeal and activity pervades the whole establishment.

The powder is now got on board; the warrant-officers "indent" or sign the proper acknowledgments for their stores at the dock-yard; and the purser, having completed the stock of provisions, closes his accounts at the victualling-office. The captain's wife begins to pack up her band-boxes in order to return home, while the Jews and bum-boat folks are pushing all the interest they can scrape together to induce the first-lieutenant to give them the priority of entrance with their goods and chattels on the approaching pay-day; in other words, to invest them with the monopoly of the market on that occasion. The sailors' wives about this period besiege the captain and his lady alternately, and interminably, with petitions to be allowed to go to sea in the ship, to all, or most of which, a deaf ear must be turned. When all things are put to rights, the port-admiral comes on board to muster and inspect the ship's company, and to see how the different equipments have been attended to.

At length, just before sailing, pay-day comes, and with it many a disgusting scene will ever be associated until the present system be modified. The ship is surrounded by a fleet of boats filled with gangs of queer-looking Jew-pedlars sitting in the midst of piles of slop-clothing, gaudy handkerchiefs, tawdry trinkets, eggs and butter, red herrings and cheeses, tin-pots, fruit, joints of meat, and bags of potatoes, well concealed beneath which are bottles and bladders filled with the most horribly adulterated spirituous liquors. As many of these dealers as can be conveniently ranged on the quarter-deck and gangways may be admitted, that the market may be as open and fair as possible; but it is very indiscreet to allow any of them to go on the main-deck.

Right happy is that hour when the ship is fairly clear of all these annoyances—sweethearts and wives inclusive—and when, with the water filled up to the last gallon, the bread-room chock full, and as many quarters of beef got on board as will keep fresh, the joyful sound of "Up anchor!" rings throughout the ship. The capstan is manned; the messenger brought to; round fly the bars; and as the anchor spins buoyantly up to the bows, the jib is hoisted, the topsails sheeted home, and off she goes, merrily before the breeze!

CHAPTER XXI.

ON NAVAL GUNNERY.

Officers who have served much afloat in old times, tell us that there was a great want of efficiency in that department of naval discipline which relates to the management of the great guns. Many ships, it is true, even during the early period of the last war, were brought into admirable fighting order by dint of the spontaneous exertions of their commanders. But in these instances, the result was generally due to the combined talents, experience, and industry, of those particular officers, and owed hardly anything to the merits of the general system in force throughout the fleet. In too many vessels of war, however, the exercise of the great guns was much neglected, or at most attended to just so far as the technical rules of the service rendered necessary. And this occurred not unfrequently even where there could be traced no want of ability or of zeal on the part of the officers. The naval profession, indeed, is so diversified in its objects, that it offers many interesting fields of view to the attention of those who engage in it heartily; and as these assume more or less importance in the eyes of commanding-officers, according to their several tastes and habits, sometimes one department, and sometimes another, gains the ascendancy, too much to the exclusion of the others.

Thus, some men in command dwell with undue attention upon the seamanship part of their duty, and think scarcely of anything but the rigging and sails, reefing and furling, and consider it an affair of life and death to make or shorten every sail, from royals to courses, in so many seconds. Others devote their thoughts almost wholly to clean decks, clean clothes, clean hammocks. Some think nothing worthy of much attention but the exact navigation of the ship, and in their scientific devotion to the moon and stars, are apt to forget all sublunary affairs. Lastly come those who hold, that as fighting is the grand object of a ship of war, their duty to their king will be best served by keeping his majesty's arms in good order, and in teaching his servants how to use them. There is much plain sense in this, and it is only to be regretted that this fancy for bringing the warlike part of the profession (a pretty important one!) into an efficient state was not universal.

Such, however, were the difficulties which officers had to contend with, that in spite of all their zeal, it too often happened that they could not always accomplish their purpose, without neglecting some other important subjects, to which it was likewise their duty to attend. Whatever was the cause, the fact of some of his majesty's ships being formerly left at times in a state of comparative inefficiency in the actual exercise of the great guns must be admitted; and were the thing less serious, or less calculated to be attended with a loss of national reputation, we might almost smile at the absurdity of such a state of things. A plain shore-going person might well ask, How it came about that the art of handling the guns should ever be neglected on board any man-of-war, when such prodigious sums were expended in equipping her, in other respects, with every possible requisite to enable her to cope with her enemies? Our ships are greatly improved in strength and every warlike quality, and there is no lack of supplies in any department, of stores, provisions, ordnance, men, or officers. Why, then, to the education which is now so general in every other branch of the profession, should not that of warlike science and gunnery practice have been added? It may be useful, however, before adverting to the remedy, to consider, in the first place, what has been the cause of such a singular state of things.

One of the reasons I take to be, that although the importance of the guns is prodigiously great when actually brought into use in earnest, they are, comparatively speaking, but seldom required

at other times, except as a sort of play. Were each one of our ships to come into real action *once* a week, or once a month, or even once a year, all difficulty would vanish, and great-gun practice would be as effectually studied as seamanship, navigation, or any other branch of our duty, the utility and urgent necessity of which are apparent at every turn of the service. There would then be no occasion for the establishment of a specific school for teaching naval gunnery. In point of fact, we know that all those ships which during the war happened to be exposed frequently to contact with the enemy, did acquire insensibly, or almost without effort, that very degree of proficiency, to gain which, other ships, less fortunate in their opportunities, often laboured very hard in vain. In peace, the best of all schools for naval gunnery, actual fighting, is shut up. But it does not follow that we are therefore to go on without instruction, and wait till the occasion of real service arrives before we begin to practise. It would be an awkward moment for the captain of a ship, if on running alongside an enemy, his equal or superior in force, he were conscious that this real action was to form the first artillery exercise of his people.

In teaching any practical science, half the art consists in making the pupils sensible of the precise difficulties to be overcome. Gunnery of any kind, but especially naval gunnery, falls peculiarly under this description. The complication is also in some degree rendered more intricate by the circumstance of the pupils being grown-up persons, who, having acquired a partial or erroneous knowledge of the subject, have often almost as much to unlearn as to acquire. There will generally be found, however, in this matter, what the mathematicians call a point of contrary flexure; and when that is passed, the advance becomes most rapid, and the desire to learn augments with every fresh gulp of instruction. In fact, improvements are so readily adopted and eagerly imparted by those who are taught to estimate their advantages, that there never was a doubt of the popularity of the new system, when once it should become known in the service at large. Who that has attended to the operations of the army in the Peninsula is not aware of the prodigious advantages in marches, in sieges, and in battles, which flowed from our possessing highly-trained corps of engineers and of artillery! And well may Sir Howard Douglas—to whom the navy stands so much indebted for instruction on this head—ask, "Why should the improvement of naval gunnery be considered less an object of national importance than the instruction and training of our land-service artillery?"

To many people it may appear a waste of time to discuss the utility of establishing a system of naval great-gun practice; but when we do occasionally find in company even professional persons treating the subject lightly, and scorning the notion of introducing afloat the nicety of shore exercise, it becomes necessary to place the subject in a broader light. I confess (and I do so with no small degree of shame), that until the formation of the gunnery establishment at Portsmouth, I was myself in some measure under the influence of this fallacy, and imagined that ship-firing might safely be compared to "shooting flying," and be ranked amongst the sleight-of-hand arts, to be taught only by actual sporting in the fields. I might have recollected, indeed, that as I never could hit a bird on the wing, unless by accident, or when the keeper chanced to fire at the same moment, there might be more analogy in the case than I dreamed of, and thence inferred that some previous instruction might have helped me to bag more game.

Without jesting, however, on matters so important to the well-being of our great proverbially national bulwark, it may not be amiss to point out a few of the difficulties and disasters which must almost necessarily attend inexperience in the day of battle on board ship.

"Nothing is so dangerous as ignorance," says Sir Humphrey Davy; and the remark is strictly applicable to this subject; for the operations connected with the right use of the great guns are so numerous and complicated, and so essentially dependent upon one another, that unless the meaning of each be thoroughly understood, and its relation to that which precedes it and that which follows be rendered quite familiar by much practice, there can be no chance of the exact order being duly attended to. In other words, as every single evolution possesses a definite purpose, it must be undertaken without haste or agitation, otherwise the grand object towards which our exertions are directed will inevitably be defeated. I need not say that the final purpose of all gunnery is to hit the enemy not only as hard as possible, but in those precise parts where he is most vulnerable. As this, however, is easier said than done, let us consider what must almost inevitably have taken place at the lower-deck gun of a line-of-battle ship, at which we shall suppose there were stationed a dozen or fourteen as gallant and willing fellows as ever stepped on a ship's deck, but who had not been previously trained, or whose training might have consisted in nothing beyond the mere evolutions under the eye of an officer, but accompanied by no detailed and practical explanation of their meaning.

After a few minutes' firing, the lower deck becomes so completely filled with smoke that no one can see two yards before him; the noise and apparent confusion swell on the unpractised senses of men who are brought for the first time into action; and be their courage what it may, they are apt to get so confounded, that their early, and, perhaps, their most precious fire is almost inevitably thrown away. If the men have never been taught the true value of a good aim, nor, theoretically as well as practically, instructed in the method of obtaining it, their only thought will of course be how to blaze away as fast and as indiscriminately as possible. After a certain degree of hurry-skurry, vociferation, and scrambling, the gun, we shall suppose, will be reloaded, run out, and a second time fired at random. Not to exaggerate the case, however, we may suppose the captain of the gun to look along the top of his gun, or what is called the line of metal, and fancy he is directing it point-blank into his opponent's main-deck port, whereas, in fact, the gun is elevated a couple of degrees, and the shot must fly over the enemy's hull.

In short, without entering minutely into the subject, it will easily be understood, that there may arise very many evils from working the great

guns of a ship with inexperienced hands. Innumerable circumstances must also occur in every action, requiring not merely zeal, courage, and presence of mind, but actual knowledge previously acquired, and so carefully examined, as to be familiarly understood and as deliberately acted upon at the moment of need, as in a period of perfect leisure and security. It is quite obvious, indeed, that deliberation in the performance of every movement in the use of the great guns afloat, becomes only the more necessary as the danger and difficulty increase, and that precipitancy at such moments not only defeats or essentially retards the execution of our purpose, but greatly contributes to the confidence and ultimate success of the enemy. There can never be any confidence on our side, nor due deliberation, nor, consequently, much good service performed, unless, in the first place, all our efforts be grounded on a thorough knowledge of what is required to be done; and, in the second place, we have gained so complete a personal familiarity with the methods by which such knowledge is to be turned to account, that under no combination of circumstances shall we be thrown off our guard, or liable to confusion.

There are many persons who imagine that the mere jog-trot round of manual exercises will accomplish all that is requisite; but I believe I am borne out by the authority of all officers who have enjoyed the advantage of actual experience in war, in saying that the greater part of the benefit of such exercises are thrown away when the exact meaning and practical purpose of every evolution has not been thoroughly explained to the men who work the guns. The mere routine very soon drops into insipidity; but when the meaning of all the movements is thoroughly understood, and the practice varied by firing with shot; and, when, moreover, each of the men is not only required in turn to give the word of command, but to explain its meaning to the others, his attention is kept fully alive, and his judgment as usefully exercised as his hands.

Up to the moment when the gun is fired off, the shot may be considered as still in the power of the captain of the gun, to use or to abuse, according to the measure of his instruction or the depth of his ignorance. But as soon as the trigger is pulled, the shot dashes from the muzzle, and there is no recal. If, at the moment of discharging the gun the seaman feels incompetent to make a right use of his power, he merely blazes away, makes an empty noise, and because he knows no better, fails to strike his enemy. With whom, however, does the fault lie? Not surely with the poor fellow himself, whose duty it is to follow in battle the exercise he has been taught at moments of inaction. The blame unquestionably rests with his employers, who, possessing the adequate means of imparting sound knowledge to him, have not, hitherto, taken pains to diffuse it amongst those under their orders.

It may possibly be useful to remark here, in passing, that the great-gun practice on board ship differs essentially from almost every other branch of naval employment. While a knowledge of the principles upon which the rudder acts, or those by which a vessel is urged straight forwards by wind falling obliquely on the sails, is highly useful to an officer, it is seldom of importance that the foremast seaman should understand a word of these matters. It is true they would not be the worse sailors for knowing the reason of these things; but in the actual daily practice of sea-life, it rarely falls to their lot to be placed in circumstances where even this small degree of scientific knowledge becomes practically useful. For as the men are seldom or never called upon to give the word of command in the evolutions of ordinary seamanship, no harm springs out of this degree of ignorance of cause and consequence. Another important difference is, that in the instance of sails and rudder, the trials and examples are so constantly recurring, that the laws by which they are regulated are fully acquired by practice. Not so with real gunnery, in the manipulations of which the case is totally different: for unless all the men be taught the specific object of every movement, and the danger of departing from the prescribed rules, the most serious inconvenience must almost necessarily follow; to say nothing of the waste of exertion and the ultimate loss of purpose in firing without effect.

Were a ship merely to fire her own guns, and not be fired at in return, or were the water always smooth, and the numbers, force, and position of the enemy always the same, and were the people at the guns invulnerable and liable to no casualties, then, indeed, a system of unexplained routine might do very well, and the men who had been trained to load, run out, and fire mechanically, would do as well as the best-instructed seamen-gunners. But when a ship is liable to be well peppered with shot herself, and when the circumstances under which she may come into action are as fluctuating as the element she floats upon, or the wind which drives her about, the matter becomes of necessity very different. In truth, it is utterly beyond the reach even of the most practised experience to say when or how a ship may be engaged. She may be called into action suddenly at dead of night, or at noonday with all leisure for preparation; in a gale of wind, or in a calm; far at sea, or on a lee-shore; she may be sailing in company with other ships, or be single-handed; full manned, or short of complement; or, lastly, she may encounter an equal, superior, or inferior force. In short, as nothing can be distinctly foreseen, there can be devised no security against confusion and doubt, except the inspiriting confidence of real knowledge, and the habit of deliberately applying that knowledge to actual practice.

In every other serious affair in life, men conceive it necessary to know something of what they are about before they act; but on board ship, generally speaking, the seamen have been accustomed, at least heretofore, to act as if the sole object in battle was to frighten the enemy by noise and smoke. Peg away! blaze away! was the word, while the men most interested in striking the enemy, appeared careless whether the shot hit or missed, so long as a brisk fire was kept up. This answered the purpose pretty well in very close fight, against some of the nations with whom we have had to contend, for the few shot which did chance to strike proved sufficient to settle the conquest. But the result turned out differently when we came to be opposed by people who "guessed" that the game of naval warfare might be played

by more than one. We then began to learn that mere firing was worse than useless, unless our men were all taught, high and low, to understand the right management of a great gun in action; and made to feel that this knowledge was really a national concern.

Up to the present time, this serious task has been left, as I have already mentioned, almost exclusively to the zeal, judgment, and knowledge of the individual captains of his Majesty's ships. It is very true that many excellent orders on the subject have been promulgated by the Admiralty, and detailed instructions given for the manual exercise of the crews, both at great guns and small arms. But nothing can be more certain than the failure of all these expedients in every case where the guns happened not to form the captain's hobby, or where, with the very best intentions, there happened not to be found the adequate degree of scientific knowledge to give such exercises the stamp of practical utility.

This state of things, though unknown to the country generally, and but partially admitted in the Navy, forcibly arrested the attention of those officers who had seen much real service, and it called forth various publications on the subject. An able pamphlet was published so early as 1814, by Captain now (Sir John) Pechell, which was followed up by others; but none of these appeals, though some of them are admirable in themselves, seem to have excited the proper degree of notice, either in or out of the profession, before the work of Major-General Sir Howard Douglas on "Naval Gunnery" made its appearance about twenty years ago. The history of this publication is curious, and not a little characteristic of the country we live in.

The author, though a soldier, and a thoroughbred one, practical and theoretical, has been so much on board ship, and has mixed so constantly with naval men both afloat and on shore, that, independently of his hereditary love for the sea, he has gained almost a professional degree of acquaintance with nautical affairs. His father, Sir Charles Douglas, having served as Rodney's captain of the fleet in the great battle of the 12th of April, 1782, Sir Howard very properly considered it a duty to his parent to investigate and set to rights the controverted question as to the originality of the manœuvre known by the name of breaking the line, with which controversy Sir Charles Douglas's name had been mixed up. To enable him to enter upon such an undertaking, however, it became an essential point that he should understand the whole subject minutely; and hence, probably, the extraordinary degree of detailed nautical knowledge which he has acquired.

It was very natural that an officer whose taste lay in this direction, whose opportunities were great, and who, moreover, had been brought up in the artillery, should direct his attention to the subject of naval gunnery. The late American war gave a consistency of purpose to these speculations, and their details being modified by frequent and cordial communications with such men as Sir John Pechell and Sir Philip Broke, the work was sent to the Admiralty in manuscript so long ago as 1817. To a person who reads the book now, the only wonder is, how such an important communication should not have produced an immediate effect.

Nothing followed, however (as we learn from the preface to the first edition), but the usual official acknowledgment and thanks; and we presume the author supposed that the only remaining way to bring his views into effectual notice was through the medium of the public press, that irresistible power, which, while it is always fatal in the long-run to error and pretension, acts like fire upon fine gold, and in time purifies it to the right use and purposes of man. At all events, Sir Howard Douglas, after having, with great taste and propriety, first submitted his work to the Admiralty for the exclusive use of the service under their direction—which offer they did not think it expedient to accept—and having obtained their free permission, published it to the world. The world accordingly have not been slow to take advantage of the extensive knowledge and sound practical views contained in the treatise alluded to; for it has been translated into several languages on the continent, and has been republished in America. The author has thus materially contributed to strengthen his own arguments by augmenting the importance of those very rivalries which it formed his original purpose to resist; and the time has now arrived when the subject can be no longer disregarded without the most imminent hazard to our national reputation.

It has frequently been made a matter of discussion, and I think very naturally, whether or not it is wise to publish any detailed statement of such political measures, or military preparations, as might by possibility prove useful to nations indisposed to this country. And there cannot be the smallest doubt that it would be politic, as well as reasonable and proper, to withhold all such communications from the world at large, provided we could keep our secret so closely to ourselves as to profit exclusively by the use of the new knowledge. Unfortunately (or perhaps fortunately), it is scarcely possible for any nation long to retain the sole possession of information which is of a character to advance her means of offensive warfare, without, at the same time, depriving herself of the full use of the discovery she has made. It is easily conceivable, for instance, that an officer should have devised a weapon of war, or an improved method of using an old one, of which his government, in their anxiety to preserve the exclusive use, might think it right to limit the knowledge to a few of their servants, and therefore forbid the publication of it. In this way, no doubt, the new-born information might be effectually concealed from other nations; but experience, we believe, abundantly shows that knowledge thus limited in its application to practice would be nearly as useless to the party possessing it as to those from whom it had been altogether withheld.

This, which at first sight looks a little paradoxical, admits of a ready explanation. Any extensive and important improvement (at least in the art of war) can be brought into effective practice only by its becoming familiarly known to all those persons who are to use it on real service. Now, this familiarity can be attained by no other means than by long-continued drilling;—and, as an essential part of drilling consists in studying the rules of any evolution, the necessity of publishing and

circulating freely, amongst all classes, every new proposition, becomes apparent, for without the means of constant reference no study can be properly followed up.

"The disadvantage of such publicity," remarks Sir Howard Douglas, "consists in this,—that the service for whose benefit suggestions are thus made does not ensure to itself the exclusive and (which is of great importance) the initial practical advantages which such suggestions or inventions may be found capable of producing. It is true, on the other hand, that improvements in any practical science are seldom generally introduced, and can only be brought forward very slowly and very partially through the medium of manuscript memoirs; and that, although the power of the press may circulate abroad much of what it may be very desirable to retain at home, yet it is by this mode only that instruction or improvement can be effectually and usefully circulated and taught amongst ourselves." It was probably this reasoning, and other considerations of the same enlarged and liberal stamp of policy, induced the Admiralty, in 1819, to sanction the publication of Sir Howard Douglas's work, which, as I have said, has been one of the principal causes of so vast an improvement in our system of naval gunnery.

On the very same grounds I am of opinion that the dissemination of a more extensive knowledge of what has been done, and is doing, on board the Excellent, must be productive of far greater good to this country than it can be to any other. For, after all, while many of our naval officers, and even many of our foremost seamen, may, by means of such information, be induced to turn their attention to the gunnery branch of the service, and thus materially to augment the naval strength of their country, no correspondent advantage will probably accrue, from the same cause, to any other nation. All that is capable of imitation, indeed, on board the Excellent, has already been imitated—just as all that was capable of imitation in the discipline and general conduct of our ships during the last war was appropriated by other nations,—but with what *effect*! The truth is, that there is a moral system of training in gunnery, as well as in everything else, which no rules can teach, and no merely formal imitation can appropriate. We have, therefore, no fears that anything which can be told in words, of the system on board the Excellent, can prove otherwise than beneficial to the service, while a full and fair statement of the advantages of following such studies may encourage both officers and men to consider the gunnery line as one worthy of their attention.

It is said, that we are slow in England to adopt improvements; and certainly we are most wisely slow to receive with favour every trashy scheme which crack-brained ingenuity devises. But it is contrary to fact to say, that we are remiss in the correction of errors, or the appropriation of what is good in science, or in any other branch of useful knowledge, speculative or practical. A dinning outcry is sometimes necessary to bring about the most wholesome reformations; but if the proposals be good in themselves, and the parties who bring them forward be truly public-spirited, their eventual adoption is quite certain. Thus we may remember the exceeding stir made about the Nautical Almanac by the astronomers of this country, who represented that even the Ephemeris of Portugal was more copious and exact than the correspondent publication in England! The controversy raged for a year or two with great asperity, till it was laid at rest by the government co-operating with the Astronomical Society in the formation of a body of tables, which have taken the lead and will preserve it as effectually as the much-abused Nautical Almanac originally did for so long a period, before all similar publications in Europe.

In like manner, people at last began to understand the question of naval gunnery; and in a few years the country possessed a more complete supply of seaman-gunners, and our ships were brought into a more efficient state of great-gun-fighting order than any other nation, and we trust they will long be enabled to maintain the lead, as heretofore, over the whole world of waters.

In 1832, the Admiralty, with the enlarged views of judicious practical statesmen, appear to have taken up the matter in a manner calculated to give the experiment suggested by Sir Howard Douglas fair play. Indeed, their measure can hardly be called an experiment, nor the result problematical; for it was grounded on such ample experience, that it could not fail, if persevered in with becoming spirit, to prove highly beneficial to the service and the country. Little, indeed, was proposed to be done but what had already been carried into execution by individual officers, who had previously had opportunities of judging of its utility in battle. The scale of the exercise, indeed, was enlarged, and the course of instruction made more systematic, while the whole was rendered uniform throughout the Navy. But nothing, strictly speaking, new or speculative was ever thought of.

The object of the naval gunners' establishment at Portsmouth, of which I shall give a hasty sketch in the next chapter, is to diffuse more generally in our ships that kind and degree of knowledge of the great-gun exercise, which the experience of many successful officers has pointed out to be most required in action. Until every captain, and in fact every officer and man afloat, is made well acquainted with his duty in this respect, not as a matter of mere taste or caprice, but as an imperative obligation, it will be vain to expect the re-establishment of that perfect confidence of success which always materially contributes to its accomplishment. It must also be remembered, that this confident, undoubting reliance on ourselves, which in such matters is alternately the cause and the effect of victory, can have no steady existence, unless it be grounded upon solid knowledge; and that, although England does possess some physical and moral advantages over other countries, which no exertion on their part can bring into the field, yet these cannot be used successfully unless we likewise take care to place ourselves at least on a par with our rivals in all other respects. It might seem invidious to advert more particularly to these intrinsic points of national superiority; but whether they exist or not, it is quite clear that we can neither hope nor deserve to succeed, in the present state of the world, as we have done heretofore, unless, in minor matters as well as in great ones, we keep

up to the average mark in the scale of nations. If we do not compete successfully in the scantling, armament, and fast-sailing of our ships—in the number, and especially in the quality of their crews—and, finally, in the precision with which we can at all times and seasons make sure of handling the great guns, we shall scarcely be able to maintain our wonted ascendancy afloat. If, from over-confidence, or through ill-timed and injudicious economy, or any other motive, we permit ourselves to drop astern of other navies in any of these respects, we may be assured that neither our parsimony nor our presumption will save us from being out-matched in strength, or outwitted in tactics, when the day of trial comes—as come it must!

Sir Howard Douglas's book is divided into five parts, all of which are worthy of the closest attention of naval men. A simple enumeration, however, will be sufficient to show the importance of the work. The first part is on the organisation and training of naval gunners; the second, on the theory and practice of gunnery applied more particularly to naval ordnance. The third part, which relates to the manual exercise of the great guns, is taken from the French; but this will, of course, give way in a future edition to the improved system now in use amongst ourselves. The fourth part treats of the equipment, practice, and service of naval ordnance, and contains much detailed information on the strength of gunpowder, the size of shot, and the most effectual method of pointing the great guns, so as to give the best chance of hitting the enemy. The last part, which treats of the tactics of single actions, is really a most extraordinary production to come from a landsman. Possibly naval men may differ as to some of the minor details; but there can be only one opinion as to the sound seamanship which pervades the article. At all events, it shows that this accomplished soldier has not conversed in vain with the sea-officers of his own day, and that he has proved himself a worthy descendant of Rodney's Captain of the Fleet on the glorious 12th of April, 1782.

All and each of the topics above enumerated, might furnish materials for expansion into popular essays on naval warfare; but for the present I shall confine myself to the first, which relates to the organisation and training of seamen-gunners.

The work of Clerk of Eldin will no doubt have occurred to the recollection of every naval reader during these discussions; for, with all its imperfections it must ever be looked upon as a most valuable historical memorial of many great sea-actions. With certain allowances, it may also be considered highly instructive, from showing the causes both of our failure and of our success. It is quite needless to enter into the controversy respecting the originality of the manœuvre of breaking the line; for Sir Howard Douglas has already shown, in the clearest and most triumphant manner, that Mr. Clerk could have been in no way instrumental, directly or indirectly, in determining Lord Rodney's movements in the great action alluded to*.

Sir Howard having settled that point, might confer a still greater service upon the naval profession, by publishing a brief and distinct manual (independent of all controversy) of the tactics, not only of single actions, but of those in which fleets should be engaged.

* See "Naval Evolutions," a memoir by Sir Howard Douglas, Bart., refuting Mr. Clerk's claims in relation to Lord Rodney's engagement on the 12th April, 1782. London: Boone. 1832.

CHAPTER XXII.

ON THE NAVAL GUNNERY ESTABLISHMENT AT PORTSMOUTH.

In the year 1825, Sir John Pechell endeavoured to bring forward the subject of Naval gunnery, in order to the formation of an establishment for training our officers and seamen; but the Admiralty took no further notice than by acknowledging the receipt of his letter. In 1827, the same officer addressed the Lord High Admiral upon the subject, and the result was the appointment of a committee, which sat in 1828, when the present exercise was recommended, but not acted upon. The true principle of fixing the complements of ships according to the weight of their guns, and the wants of the different parts of the ship, was also recommended and considered. But it is to be doubted if even all the reiterated remonstrances of Sir Howard Douglas, Sir John Pechell, and others, would have produced the desired effect, but for the able pamphlet signed a Flag Officer, and supposed to be written by Admiral Sir Charles Penrose.

In the summer of 1830, the first movement towards the establishment of a system of naval gunnery instruction, was made by Admiralty order, at Portsmouth, under the charge of Captain George Smith, who had, in the year before, transmitted to the Admiralty the "Prospectus of a Plan for the Improvement of Naval Gunnery, without any additional Expense." This officer was borne as supernumerary commander on the books of the Victory. A detachment of the Marine Artillery were embarked on board His Majesty's ship Excellent, in order to act as instructors; and parties of officers and seamen were occasionally sent to that ship to learn the exercise then in force. A number of valuable trials of ranges from guns of different calibres, were also made over the mud banks, lying to the northward of the dockyard, a situation well adapted to artillery practice, and which Captain Smith had the merit of first pointing out.

But no regular or extensive system of training, on the principles of Sir H. Douglas, Sir P. Broke, and Sir John Pechell, (which is the plan now in force,) was established till the beginning of 1832, when the Admiralty resolved to remodel and greatly to improve and extend the whole scheme of great-gun exercise, by the establishment of an organised and *permanent* corps of seamen-gunners. In this view a ship was fitted out in Portsmouth harbour, for the express purpose of affording instruction to the officers and men of his Majesty's Navy in the theory and practice of naval gunnery. By means of this establishment, it was intended that one uniform system of great-gun practice should be communicated gradually, but with certainty, to the sea service at large. His Majesty's ship Excellent, an old line-of-battle ship, of which Lord Collingwood was captain, in the action

of the 14th February, off Cape St. Vincent, was appropriately selected for this purpose. This was the ship which had been used by Capt. Smith during the preceding year, and upon that officer's being promoted to the rank of post Captain, she was placed under the command of Captain, now Sir Thomas Hastings, an officer of talents and experience. A proportion of intelligent and active young seamen, not exceeding thirty years of age, were engaged for five years, renewable at the expiration of that period, with an advance of pay, amounting to two shillings a month for the first re-engagement, in addition to that of A. B., or any other rating they might obtain in the ships to which they should be sent on leaving the Excellent. After the first five years' service, should they choose to continue longer, they were allowed three shillings per month additional; and at the end of the second term, on their re-entering and producing certificates of good conduct, they were to be entitled to a further addition of two shillings a month; making, in all, seven shillings per month over and above the pay of any other ratings they may hold in the ship*.

By means of this and other encouragements, a very efficient permanent corps of seamen-gunners was soon collected, and gradually distributed over the service. It is from them alone that master-gunners and gunners'-mates are now selected. All the officers and seamen of the ships into which these persons are drafted, are minutely instructed in their various duties at the guns. To entitle these men to the advantages above enumerated, they must produce a certificate from the Captain of the Excellent, of their proficiency and good conduct. These seamen-gunners are to be considered eligible to the situation of boatswains also, if otherwise qualified; and all the ratings of petty officers are open to them. This extension is most judicious, and one which must have sprung from a quarter well acquainted with the habits and feelings of sailors, since in the formation of all such general arrangements as this system of instruction in naval gunnery, it is of primary importance to carry along with us the sympathy of those whom we wish to influence. And in the joint operation of teaching what is new and good, and unteaching what is old and erroneous, it becomes material to possess the co-operation of those leading persons in the ship who have sprung from the lower walks of the profession, and who continue to mix much with the people, but, at the same time, are respected by them as superiors. The boatswain is strictly of this class, for he is always promoted from before the mast; and, as he ought to be the best seaman in the ship, so he is generally trusted by the crew as a standard authority. Thus there is seldom any question amongst the men about the propriety of what this officer recommends. If, therefore, he shall be only half as well versed in these matters as his brother warrant-officer the gunner, he may possess twice as much influence in rendering the new system popular on board; and we all know how infinitely better every service is performed, when it is heartily entered into.

The complement of the Excellent is two hundred and sixty men, a portion of whom are to consist of a lieutenant, three non-commissioned officers, and two privates of the marine artillery. The men are first instructed in what may be called the elementary-theoretical parts of their duty, such as the following: the names and uses of all the different parts of the gun and its carriage; the meaning of the word "dispart," and how it is to be expressed in terms of linear magnitude, and also in degrees; in what way its amount is to be determined, and how applied to practice; what constitutes point-blank; what is the line of metal range; and, generally, what is the effect of elevating or depressing the gun upon the range, or distance to which the shot is projected; what is meant by the term "windage," and what are likely to be the errors in direction and in the force of the projectile from this cause, which lesson also teaches the importance of preserving shot from rust. The theory and practice of the effects of different charges of powder form important branches of the subject; and likewise the influence on the range and direction of shot by firing more than one ball at a time. Various other minor points of detail, but all of them practically useful in their way, are likewise to be taught; such as ascertaining the strength of gunpowder by actual trial, constructing signal-rockets, priming-tubes, quick and slow matches, making and filling cartridges, drying powder, choosing flints, and repairing gun-locks. The use of shells, as fired from long guns, a new and important department of naval gunnery, has of late been added to the course.

To render any such course of instruction of much utility in real service, it must be formed partly of theory and partly of practice, run together in such away that the actual illustrations may either follow, or accompany, or, in some cases, precede the mathematical reasoning upon which the whole depends. In this view, the Excellent has been fitted up with every different kind of gun, from the formidable eight-inch gun, and the two-and-thirty pounder, to the smallest carronade which is to be fired from the bows of a boat. Every kind of lock, also, and priming tube, and sight for taking aim with, which is now in use, or which it is thought expedient to bring into the exercise, has been placed on board; and, in order to give the men a habit of thinking for themselves, they are taught the true principles, as well as the use, of each of these inventions.

The master-gunners from all the ships in ordinary, and likewise from those in commission, who come to Spithead, or enter Portsmouth harbour, or who may be ordered to fit out there, are required to repair on board the Excellent, that they may perfect themselves in the exercises there taught, and thus be fitted to instruct the people on board their respective vessels. The captains of his Majesty's ships in commission fitting at Portsmouth, are enjoined also to send a portion of their officers and crews on board, to be thoroughly schooled in the system, which has become the uniform practice throughout the Navy.

It need scarcely be mentioned, that the first thing required of the seamen-gunner is a perfect

* An alteration has since been made in the rate of this advance of pay. Four shillings a month is now the addition made, on immediate re-entry, to the pay of able seamen, or of any higher rating they may hold. If at the end of their *second* period of service they re-enter, they receive five shillings in addition to their pay, not seven, as originally ordered.

acquaintance with the name and use of all parts of his gun, the carriage, and everything used in working it; great pains being taken to show the utility of such knowledge. For example, a man is told the name and use of a certain bolt or ring, and at the same time it is explained to him, that in the event of that part of the gun-carriage being injured by an enemy's shot, he may know what to ask for in the gunner's store-room; and when he returns with it, he may know how to replace the broken bolt by the new one.

In the same careful and scientific way, the manual exercise of the great guns is taught, and the true meaning and purpose of every movement deliberately pointed out. By the manual exercise is meant, the details of all those operations by which the gun is cast loose, loaded, run out, pointed, fired, and again secured for sea. This forms the second branch of instruction.

As I may advert to these points more particularly by-and-by, I shall merely mention, in passing, that the manual exercise includes casting loose the lashings by which the gun is secured, and hooking the side tackles; worming and sponging out the gun preparatory to inserting the charge; taking the cartridge from the powderman, and placing it correctly in the bore; next follows the ramming home, which requires not merely strength at the muzzle of the gun, but the employment of some skill at the breech, to discover when the cartridge has reached its proper place. The captain of the gun determines this, by inserting the priming-wire into the touch-hole. The shot is next to be inserted, and due care taken that it be neither too tight, so as to jam half-way down, and thus risk bursting the gun, nor so loosely held in its place by too small a wad, that when the ship lies over it may roll out again. The gun is then to be run out, pointed, and fired.

All these things, and many details which I have not stated—such as stopping the vent, and sponging the gun—are simple in themselves, and to unpractised eyes they often appear insignificant; but, as it may be shown, that the neglect of any one of these precautions may be fatal to the success of the whole, too much pains can never be taken to demonstrate the vital importance of each operation, step by step. To run out the gun, for example, requires the use of the side-tackles; but if these be not properly handled, much of their force is lost. This is easily explained to the men, who are already familiar with the use of ropes, and blocks, and who know, by practice at least, the mechanical advantage of a double-block over a single one. With a full crew, and fighting one side only, especially if it be the lee-side, the operation of running the gun out is abundantly easy it is true—though, even then, great attention is required at the train tackle for the prevention of accident. But when the numbers are reduced by the casualties of action, or by any other cause, or when the inclination of the deck is considerable, from the pressure of sail, it requires not only economy in the use of the men's strength, but some address in multiplying that strength by mechanical means. Again, if the vent, or touch-hole, be not carefully stopped after the gun is fired, or the sponge be not properly used, a burning piece of the old cartridge may remain, which will inflame the next charge, and probably blow away the arms of the men who are using the rammer.

There arises considerably more advantage in action, from such detailed arrangements, than is generally supposed; for, while they in no respect interfere with the dashing courage of the master-spirits in a ship, when the moment comes for vigorous enterprise, they engage the attention and direct the exertions of persons in whom presence of mind and activity are not pre-eminent, but who may become eminently useful when properly disciplined.

To point the guns correctly, every one will understand, is an object of first-rate importance, and ought to be taught and practised not only with the greatest deliberation, but under the greatest attainable variety of circumstance. If the gun be laid too high or too low, that is, if it be elevated so high in its aim that the shot will pass over the enemy, or be depressed so low that it will strike the water and sink into it without any ricochet, the whole labour is wasted. In like manner, if the muzzle of the gun be pointed too far to the right, or too far to the left, the path of the shot will pass a-head or a-stern of the enemy's ship. It becomes, therefore, of the highest consequence to instruct the men in the theory, as well as in the practice, of this delicate part of the process. In the act of pointing a gun, the theory of a shot's path, and the influence of the elevation of the gun upon its course, distance, and power of penetration, become so essentially parts of the exercise, that, unless means be devised to explain these things clearly to the people, there is no possibility of their firing with effect in action. To speak more correctly, there is very little chance, and certainly nothing but chance, of their hitting the enemy effectually, unless the men be instructed, either by long and varied experience in war (an advantage which few can hope to be possessed of at any time), or unless they be taught to understand the joint operation of theory and practice.

Most people are aware, that a gun is not so thick at the muzzle as at the breech, for the obvious reason, that the greatest violence of the explosion of the powder takes place at the inner end, which must, therefore, be made proportionably strong. But few persons in any situation of life, and hardly any belonging to such an unreflecting class as sailors, will infer from this form of the gun, that the internal bore cannot be parallel to the external line drawn from the breech to the muzzle. Or, in other words, that while the axis of the bore of the gun is directed to one object, the "line of metal," as it is termed, or that along which the eye is carried from the "base ring" (or thickest part) to the "muzzle-ring" will be directed to another object. Consequently, the person who, by using the "line of metal," levels a gun, as he supposes, point-blank, or directly pointed at an object which is near him, will inevitably throw his shot clean over it; for the bore of his gun, instead of being directed straight at the object, will be elevated from one to two and a half degrees above it, according to the nature of the gun.

Sir Philip Broke, whose people had been thoroughly trained to the use of the great guns in the Shannon, engaged the Chesapeake at close quarters, and captured her in eleven minutes chiefly in consequence of every gun being pointed

by rules, of which all his men, from long and patient instruction, perfectly understood the purpose. In a similar situation, with the same object in view, and expecting to hit the very parts of the hull which the Shannon's people knew they would strike, many other ships would have sent almost every shot in their broadside right over the enemy, instead of directly into his main deck, with such destructive effect.

Sir John Pechell, an officer of great practical knowledge, devised, on board his ship, a scheme for accomplishing one important branch of this purpose, which has been generally adopted, and serves well to explain to the seaman what is required. This invention, taken in conjunction with another, which I shall afterwards explain, goes far to accomplish the practical part of the problem. Sir John prefaces the description of his contrivance by the following judicious observations, which apply with more or less force to the whole science of naval gunnery.

"In the first place, it is necessary to convince sailors practically, that the thing you wish to teach them is absolutely necessary; and, therefore, until they are shown why the line of metal will not do for a point-blank shot, as well as a line produced by "disparting," which shall be parallel to the axis of the bore, they will not care whether they use a sight or not."*

I must here explain, that "disparting" is a device for obtaining, on the outside of the gun, a line along which the eye may look in a direction parallel to the bore of the piece. A gun pointed at any mark by this line, is said to be laid "point-blank." In practice the process of disparting may be accomplished in various ways. The most obvious and natural of which would be, to place something on the muzzle, to spread it out as far, relatively to the bore, as the base ring or breech of the gun. But as this would be attended with inconvenience, it is usual to attach what is called a dispart, or raised piece of metal, to the second "reinforce ring," which is near the middle of the gun. This dispart is made to rise exactly as high as the base ring of the gun, and consequently the eye looks along a line parallel to the bore. When the eye of the person taking the aim is so placed as to bring the notch in the base ring, the top of the dispart, and the centre of the target, in one line, the gun is said to be laid point-blank; and this is technically true, whether the target be below, on a level with, or above the horizontal plane.

To satisfy his sailors of this, however, Sir John Pechell had a wooden gun made, resembling in all respects, except in weight, the other guns of his ship. A small hole was then bored through the cascabel, or nob at the extreme inner end of the gun, so that when the eye of a person standing in the rear was placed at this hole, any mark, say the centre of a target, lying directly in the line of the axis of the bore, could be seen. The object of this ingenious contrivance is to verify the previous movement, by showing that the gun laid in the manner just described is directed straight to the white spot in the centre of the mark. But when the eye of the person pointing the gun is raised up till he can look along the external surface, or "line of metal" (no dispart being used), the direction of his view will no longer fall on the centre of the target, but considerably below it. Thus it is demonstrated to him that the true direction of the bore of the gun is above that obtained by looking along the line of metal. If the gun is next elevated till the aimer, looking along the line of metal, or top of the piece, just sees the centre of the target, and his eye is then brought to the little hole bored through the cascabel, he will discover that the true direction of the bore is now above the mark to which it is wished to direct the gun. The proposition before enunciated, therefore, becomes manifest, that if a gun be laid at "point-blank" by the "line of metal," instead of the "disparted line," the shot must pass over a near object.

As it is of very great consequence that this problem—the root of all artillery practice—should be distinctly understood in the outset, I shall go over the experiment in Sir John Pechell's own words.

"I have adopted an expedient," he says, at page 16 of his admirable little tract, "which not only convinces the seaman of the utility of disparting the gun, but makes them quite fastidious as to its accuracy; and it is invariably the rule, when the captain of a gun is to be instructed, to do it in the following manner:—A wooden gun has been turned and mounted on a travelling carriage; and being bored with a small auger, is disparted with an iron sight, having a rule joint of the same description as the long guns. The man to be instructed first points the gun (by the line of metal) at a fixed object inside of the ship; he is then told to look through the bore, when he finds that his eye is directed to an object considerably higher. But by raising the sight, which produces a line parallel to the axis of the bore, it leads to the same object as that seen through the auger-hole. It is not difficult to show him, also, by a drawing on paper, the cause of difference between the line of metal and the bore; and by these means, each man may be taught the use of the sights, as well as to ascertain if the gun have been properly disparted." This wooden gun, I may add, is in constant use on board the Excellent.

If, with Sir John Pechell's assistance, I have succeeded in making this matter intelligible, it will be easily seen that the principle of pointing the great guns may be extended, by well-known rules, from the case of point-blank to any other given range; for the sights fitted on the top of the gun may be contrived with adjustments suited to every distance between that of point-blank, and the extreme range of the piece at the greatest elevation which the height of the port will allow of. By a proper combination of theory and actual experiment, the angle of elevation, at which every different gun will throw a shot so as to strike an object placed at given distances, is first ascertained; after which, by means of the sights, which are contrived so as to carry graduated scales, the seaman can lay his gun with precision whenever the distance of the object is known. By precision I mean that degree of accuracy of aim which will ensure the shot hitting near the place to which the sight is adjusted.

Unless, however, the gun be fired when the ship's motion has brought the object exactly to

* Observation upon the Defective Equipment of Ships' Guns. By Captain Sir John Pechell, R.N., 1824. 2d edition, 1828. 1st edition 1812.

bear, as viewed along the sight, the shot will be thrown away. Practice afloat and in battle, I need hardly repeat, is by far the best method of teaching this delicate part of the process of naval gunnery; but two devices have been hit upon as substitutes, which I have high authority for saying have been found to answer the purposes of instruction in a manner which could scarcely have been expected.

The first was invented by Sir Philip Broke, whose good fortune it was to demonstrate, by his success in actual warfare, the utility of those exercises in which he trained his people with such unwearied patience and assiduity beforehand. I find a description of this simple method of practising men to point a gun which is in motion, in the pamphlet already quoted; but as this tract, I believe, is not now to be procured, I shall give it in the author's own words.

"What I have stated about the instruction of captains of guns applies only to firing at a fixed object, supposing the ship has no motion; but as this can seldom be the case, it is necessary, before a captain of a gun is considered fit for his station, that he should learn to fire a *flying shot*. The forecastle-gun is brought upon the quarter-deck, and a spar placed in its muzzle, with a hand-spike across the end. By this, two men elevate and depress the gun, thereby imitating the rolling motion of the ship. The captain of the gun then looks for his object, which is fixed at the fore-part of the ship, and (always when the gun is rising) throws in the quoin, or elevating wedge, when he catches his aim. It also teaches him patience, very necessary for a sailor in action; and by teaching him to fire when the ship is rising, keeps the object constantly in view; consequently, the man is in a great degree of preparation (before the gun is sufficiently high) to pull the trigger; if a different mode was adopted, the gun would be pointed below the object before he could get it off."—*Captain Pechell's Observations*, p. 18*.

I may add, in further explanation, to those not familiar with such things, that from the moment the quoin is wedged in, the gun becomes fixed; after which the correctness of the seaman's aim can be examined at pleasure by the instructor.

The second method of instructing men in the important task of aiming a gun properly in sea practice, is by means of an ingenious invention, known by the name of its inventor, Captain George Smith, and called his moveable target. This consists of a common circular mark, with rings and bull's eye, as usual, so contrived, that instead of being fixed, it can be moved up and down, and also from side to side. This is effected by means of a handle worked by a man placed behind it. The fulcrum, which is also the centre of these motions, is fitted with a ball and socket-joint, allowing a free play in every direction as long as it is wished to keep the target in motion. All these movements can be suddenly arrested by a spring, which is disengaged the instant a cord is pulled by the man aiming the gun. The target is set up at one end of the deck, while the wooden gun already described, or a real gun if it be thought better, is placed at 30 or 40 feet from it. The cord connected with the target is made long enough to come so far aft as to be within reach of the captain of the gun's hand, and being led through a ring attached to the lock, he pulls it the moment he conceives his gun to bear on the bull's eye, precisely as he would do the lanyard of his lock, were he actually firing. The gun, I should have mentioned, is first brought nearly to the mark by means of training, and by elevating or depressing its muzzle; it is then allowed to remain fixed till the person who is pointing it sees the bull's eye of the target come across his line of sight; at that instant he pulls the string, and the target stops.

One of the great advantages of this contrivance is, the power which it gives to the person superintending the exercise to examine the accuracy of the aim; for as the target is suddenly fixed in its place, and the gun likewise remains stationary, either the officer, or the captain of the gun himself, at his leisure, can discover how near he has come to the mark, and in what direction the tendency of his error lies. Perhaps, however, the chief merit of this, and every other device for teaching the art of pointing sea artillery, is the absolute necessity of deliberation which it inculcates, by proving to the seaman, that unless they really use patience and acquire the habit of taking great care, they will never hit their enemy except by mere chance. Uninstructed sailors are universally observed to have no object in their minds, but to fire away as hard as ever they can—careless of "new-fangled

* In the original editions of these Fragments, I ascribed the merit of this ingenious device to Sir Philip Broke, as I have done above; but an experienced friend called my attention to the passage, and having stated that Sir John Pechell, and not Sir Philip Broke, was the inventor, I took the liberty of writing to Sir John Pechell, to ascertain, from undoubted authority, how the matter stood.—The following answer is so honourable to the writer for its manly frankness, and so truly characteristic, that I have requested the writer's permission to add it entire at this place.

Admiralty July 24th, 1840.

MY DEAR SIR,—I thank you very much for enabling me to correct the error which would have appeared in your work.

The merit of introducing the spar into the muzzle of the gun, in teaching the men to fire correctly when the ship has motion, belongs to Sir Philip Broke: that was the method he used. I added the handspike, because I found that one man was hardly enough, and (he having hold of the spar) was in the way of the man who pointed at the target: there is no merit in this last, as an original idea,—but certainly without the handspike it was not so efficient.

If there are any other points upon which you desire information, I shall be happy to afford it,—particularly on such as I have no claim to,—as I have never wished to take anything from Sir Philip Broke; on the contrary, I have always endeavoured to do him justice, and I am sure I cannot do it more effectually than by saying that it was the extraordinary effect of the Shannon's fire upon the Chesapeake, which convinced me, in a moment, that Sir P. Broke had trained his men in a manner very different from that in common use, by which they were enabled to fire with so much effect. The shot struck the Chesapeake in one line, about two feet above the main-deck. I lost no time in going to work.

Very faithfully yours,

(Signed) S. JNO. BROOKE PECHELL.

To Capt. Basil Hall, R.N.

gimcracks," as they used formerly to call the only methods by which success can be secured! The consequence is, that, in such cases, almost all the shots fired are wasted; and if the enemy's crew have been duly trained beforehand, and their ship be well managed in other respects, the battle may be lost to us, in spite of our having fired three or four times as often as our antagonist—with this difference, that nine in ten of his shots may have hulled us, while nine in ten of ours have missed him.

After all, then, the point of greatest importance in any system of naval gunnery, is the unceasing inculcation and the habitual exercise of the coolest deliberation—a quality unspeakably more important than rapid firing. If, indeed, quick and correct firing could be conjoined, it would be idle to talk of limiting the celerity of the practice; but as experience goes to prove that but a small proportion of all the shot fired in any action take effect, it becomes of much greater moment to fire seldom, but with precision, than frequently and at random. In fact, the best kind of training would be that which should teach the men to consider it irksome and disgraceful to make a blustering noise to no purpose, and at the same time should convince them of the paramount importance of taking such careful aim before pulling the trigger, that not a single shot should ever miss. Under the most favourable circumstances, even in a still harbour, this is not easy; while, at sea, though the surface be not rough, the difficulty is immensely increased; and if darkness, smoke, violent motion, and the awkward intrusion of the enemy's shot, be superadded, the embarrassment to unpractised officers and men becomes so great, that much efficient service of the guns cannot be reckoned upon. These, however, are the golden moments for well-disciplined and well-exercised crews to take advantage of. For such circumstances must insure the triumph of whichever party has learned his business so thoroughly as to see his way clearly in the midst of a confusion terrific to his antagonist, who has not learned the value of systematic coolness and deliberation.

With respect to the interesting experiment* now under course of trial at Portsmouth, on board the Excellent, I shall merely state, that after the manual exercise has been completely learned both by officers and men, those who are found thus qualified are advanced to the next stage—that of firing with powder—then to that of firing at a mark with shot, and otherwise handling the gun exactly as they would do in real action. Care is taken throughout these exercises to vary the duties of the men at the gun, so that each in his turn may be called upon to show his proficiency in every one of the duties, from that of the captain of the gun to that of the powder-man. All, therefore, are taught, not only to obey the word of command, but to give it, and also to explain succinctly the meaning of the terms used, and to require similar explanations from the other men. I need not add, that many useful experiments are tried, with guns of various calibres, with different charges of powder, at different degrees of elevation, with more than one shot, and so on, in order to render the minds of the men familiar with as many as possible of those cases which are likely to arise.

In connexion with these practical manipulations, a course of mathematical study is chalked out for the young officers, under a well-qualified instructor, who messes with the officers, as he ought always to do, and who enables all his pupils to proceed in the theory of these matters, along with the real practice. The seamen-gunners also have been encouraged to improve themselves, under a regular instructor, in such branches of knowledge as lie within the range of their capacity, without being foreign to their habits. It is something new to a sailor to make calculations; and although his task be sufficiently elementary, it seems indispensable to the utility of his performance that it should be well understood. The rules for disparting a gun require some knowledge of figures, for the elevation is expressed in degrees and minutes. The length of the range or flight of a shot before it touches the water, compared with the elevation, weight of the ball, and the initial velocity, is a problem that cannot be understood without some study. If, moreover, from this body of trained seamen the master-gunners and boatswains of our ships are in future to be selected, it becomes of still greater consequence that they should all be taught to read and write, and have a competent knowledge of arithmetic. It is, indeed, wonderful how eagerly and how soon the men acquire a perception of the importance of acting by theoretical rules in the use of their guns. When, for instance, they have once learned that the path of a cannon ball is never straight, they are impatient to discover what course it actually does take through the air.

Lord Nelson's characteristic maxim of getting so close alongside of your enemy that no shot can miss, is still, unquestionably, by far the best standing rule for naval gunnery. But these close quarters cannot always be gained; and in many circumstances (such as that of bad weather at sea) may not be desirable. Neither, perhaps, may your enemy permit this near approach. On the contrary, we must act upon the supposition of his being often able to choose and preserve the distance most favourable to himself; and we should know beforehand, in every case, what steps we ought to take in order to bring him to our terms, instead of allowing him to dictate the terms to us. The old custom of firing a shot "to try the distance," is unworthy of the present times, and he who acts by such a groping rule will be sure to fail. In fact, no shot ought ever to be fired till the distance be tolerably well known; nor is there any good reason for wasting a single discharge. If sights be fitted to the guns, and the men be properly instructed in their use, this need never happen. "But," Sir Howard Douglas judiciously remarks, "I am persuaded that 'instrumental sights,' which admit of nice adjustment corresponding to different elevations, entrusted to the

* P.S.—1840.—The above expression, which was printed in 1834, is no longer applicable; for the gunnery establishment at Portsmouth, having been found to answer all the purposes for which it was formed, and many more, is no longer an experiment. I may mention that the Boyne, an old three-decker, and a much more roomy and commodious ship in all respects, was substituted for the Excellent, but the old name was judiciously retained, from its connexion with the original establishment.

handling of untrained men, would frequently occasion the most serious consequences. Action may commence at considerable distances, which may rapidly lead to close battle; but should corresponding alterations not be made in the original adjustment of the sights for long ranges, what may not be the consequence*?" It may be added that the same evils would result from what is called tangent firing, if the height pointed out were not altered to suit the changes of distance.

This is so very obvious, that the argument for establishing a regular course of instruction for training naval gunners, now that our guns are fitted with sights, is irresistible. But an essential part of this training, as I have before said, must consist in teaching the men, first, what is the real path of a shot; and, secondly, in showing them how to lay their gun and fire it, so that the shot may strike the part required, however wide of the mark the gun may, to ignorant eyes, appear to be directed. Now, it is clear, that if the class to which an enemy's ship belongs be known, the height of her masts is known also pretty nearly; and thence, by a very simple process, her distance may be discovered. An angle taken with a quadrant by one of the midshipmen would settle this point at any moment. With this datum, the guns may be directed point-blank at certain parts of the enemy, with a certainty of hitting others which lie lower; for this is a matter, not of chance, but of mathematical calculation. On this principle Sir Howard Douglas has computed several tables, adapted to the use of different kinds of ordnance, showing what parts of the mast ought to be aimed at, in order to strike the hull, at whatever distance the ships may be from one another. Thus, for example, if a large frigate, with a long twenty-four-pounder on her main-deck, which is raised say nine feet above the water, wishes to strike the hull of another first class frigate distant two hundred and ninety-seven yards, the gun may be laid point-blank, that is, with the axis of the bore directed straight to the part intended to be struck; or, which will insure the same thing, by the captain of the gun using the dispart sight parallel to the bore. If the distance, however, be seven hundred and ninety yards, and the same dispart sight be used, the gun must be directed not to the hull, but, by help of the dispart, point-blank to the main-yard; the calculation having shown that, in the time the shot takes to fly so far, it will have fallen through the height of the main-yard above the hull, which height is equal to the natural tangent of the angle of elevation, in terms of the distance as radius; and thence the term Tangent Practice for this method of firing. There are two objections to its use which may be useful to consider, not merely on their own account, but on that of the general question of instructing seamen in the science of naval gunnery.

In the first place, it may be objected to this mode of firing, that it implies a knowledge of the distance; but Sir Howard Douglas has very adroitly escaped from that difficulty, by reminding us that a knowledge of the distance is not more material in this case than in the ordinary practice, where the sights are supposed to be altered from time to time as the distance varies. And he quotes high naval authority (that of Sir Philip Broke) for the opinion that, with people not well trained to the intricacies of elevation, the practice of naval ordnance might be simply and uniformly conducted by general orders, given from time to time, indicating the aims that should be taken either with the point-blank sight, or with the line of metal, as the case might be. (See Sir H. Douglas's Tables XX. to XXIII. and Articles 171 to 181 inclusive.)

The tangent sights of Congreve and Millar have been devised for the very same purpose; so that the gun may at once be raised as many degrees as are required to hit any part of a ship, provided, as before, the distance be known. These sights simplify the operation, as they include in the same rule the method of firing at point blank, or at a distance—namely, to point straight at the object—and therefore they are preferable to the tangent practice of old times.

The second objection, which it may be useful to meet, respecting all varieties of what is called tangent practice, viz., aiming at a high object in order to strike a lower one, is, that it involves observations and computations too nice for the agitating period of action, and that, under any circumstances, it is too refined for the comprehension of seamen. I grant that, for the comprehension of ignorant and uninstructed seamen, it is much too refined; but I cannot suppose that any seaman of ordinary capacity, who should have ever pitched a cricket-ball from his hand, or ascertained, by actual experiment, that a shot aimed at the main-yard of a ship, at a certain distance, always struck the hull, would not be anxious to learn what were the other points he should aim at, to accomplish the same purpose at different distances.

With respect to the difficulty of making the requisite observations in time of action, it may be remarked, that unless some kind of estimate be formed of the distance, either by the officer in command or by the men at the guns, and the practice be regulated accordingly, the whole affair becomes a matter of chance. It is worth considering, therefore, whether it be wiser to let each man guess at the distance, and blaze away haphazard, or let the head and director of the whole first determine the distance by means which are infallible, or as nearly so as the case will admit of, and then issue orders from time to time from the quarter-deck, regulating the angle at which the guns are to be elevated in conformity to such observations.

The arrangement by which Sir P. Broke was enabled to throw hot shot in a horizontal line was by a scale, after the guns had been laid horizontal, either by spirit level or otherwise. This scale was marked with even spaces, and the guns were laid by direction from the quarter-deck. Sir John Pechell improved on this idea, by making them tangents; and he also established the pendulum, which at once showed how the gun should be laid.

As to the difficulty of making the requisite computations in the heat of action, there seems nothing in this; for the whole may be made leisurely at any other time. They are all capable of being reduced to the compendious form of a table, which may be used without difficulty in the hottest fight, by any man possessing that degree of coolness without which his exertions are useless,

* Sir H. Douglas on Naval Gunnery, 2d edition, p. 226.

and the due degree of deliberation on the part of his people impossible. It ought also, undoubtedly, to be made the exclusive and specific occupation of some one officer to ascertain the enemy's distance during the action. The captain's duty, then, as at all times, is to do little or nothing himself, but to see everything done properly. If he performs this office fully, he will always have enough to attend to without personally occupying himself with details. At all events it is quite obvious that the distance of the enemy is an affair which should be ascertained upon deck, and it should be communicated to the different officers in command of the respective quarters, from time to time, as changes occur.

Finally, it may be remarked, that as there is no season in which the magical effects of good discipline are more decidedly exhibited than in times of danger and difficulty, so there is none in which superior knowledge, and its attendant confidence, imparts to others their animating spirit with more certainty. It is at such trying seasons that the electric spark of a great and generous example tells throughout a ship's company, and that an officer of experience, courage, and talents, makes his ascendancy to be felt, reaps the rich harvest of his previous care, and overpays himself a thousandfold for all his past anxieties. It is, then, also that a less vigilant officer may be forced to recollect, with shame and remorse, the golden opportunities he has neglected of improving his people in those exercises which it is now too late to employ with effect.

It may be useful to consider, that exactly in proportion as the intricacies and dangers of the service increase, so will the value of previous instruction generally become manifest, not merely in giving certainty of purpose to every evolution, but in imparting that degree of steadiness and deliberation, without which there can be no success, while there may often ensue much personal as well as national discredit.

It would be easy to cite instances from our naval history to prove the fatal effects of neglecting this important part of naval science. But the task would be invidious. A more pleasing office would be to show the astonishing success which has attended the right use of the weapons in our hands. It is well known that in Sir William Hoste's celebrated action in the Adriatic, more damage was done to the enemy as they came down by the slow and deliberate firing of well-aimed single guns, from the main-deck of his ship, the Amphion, than a dozen ordinary broadsides would have produced; and I need not again refer to Sir Philip Broke's action in the Shannon, which settled the business, by great guns, in a few minutes.

Before quitting the subject of sea-fighting, it may be useful to suggest, that perhaps not half enough use has hitherto been made of musketry in ship actions. It seems clear, that if twenty or thirty expert marksmen were distributed about a frigate in action, and instructed to fire into the enemy's ports, the efficiency of his great guns would be seriously interfered with.

A very able brother-officer of mine, who paid great attention to this branch of his duty during the war, and often proved the value of such study, writes to me on the subject of musketry-practice in sea-fights, in a style so graphic and instructive, that I shall quote his own words:—

"Cut a man out of a bit of wood, size of life; paint him like a French soldier; fit a head for him, formed of an iron hoop and a piece of canvas, and let this shift on and off the body; take care, of course, to make his face very fierce, with mustaches, &c. Stick this figure up in the jolly-boat, which you may tow astern at any distance most convenient; and, after a few weeks' practice, you will not be able to make heads fast enough for your Frenchman!"

It is satisfactory to know, that it forms an essential part of the instruction on board the Excellent, to train the men to the use of small-arms as well as the great guns; and if, as I hope, we shall soon see rifles, with percussion-locks, introduced into the Navy, the efficiency of our ships of war will be much increased in the day of battle.

P.S.—1840.—Most of the above chapter was written in 1833, and I have great pleasure in adding that the expectations of the Admiralty and the wishes of the service have been fully answered by the results, up to this time (the summer of 1840). The following extracts from an article on this subject, printed in that admirable periodical, the United Service Journal, for September 1839, will show how well the system has succeeded.

"We have already remarked that the Admiralty plan for the new and extended system of naval gunnery instruction boasts of no originality, but is almost entirely derived from Sir Howard Douglas's suggestions, and from those valuable hints thrown out by Sir John Pechell, already alluded to. As, however, none of the official orders or instructions relating to the formation of the Gunnery Establishment have been made public, we cannot do better than extract a few more passages from Sir Howard Douglas's book, as descriptive, by anticipation, of the plan which was evidently adopted from that work in 1832, and which has been followed up ever since, with only such extensions and other modifications as experience has recommended, without in any respect departing from the fundamental principles of his original proposal:—

"To instruct the rising class of officers in gunnery," says he, "a short course of theoretical instruction, showing all the established principles, should be introduced at the Naval College." This suggestion has been fully adopted, except that the theoretical instruction has been given on board the Excellent, which is a much better place than the College, on many accounts. The juxtaposition of actual practice with mathematical demonstration has been found to have an admirable effect on both; and there is no part of the system on board the Excellent more worthy of approbation than the two schools of mathematical instruction; one for the seamen-gunners, which is simple and elementary,—the other for the officers, which is carried much farther, and includes branches of knowledge highly useful to them, not merely in gunnery, which is the chief object, but in other departments of their profession. We may add that this course of mathematical instruction has been found of the highest utility in afford-

ing a rational and interesting occupation for the numerous young men assembled on board the Excellent, who could not with any advantage have been fully employed all day long with the mere practice of gunnery. Their tastes and habits, as well as thoughts, therefore, we are sure, have been essentially improved by this course of mental discipline. In speaking of this branch of the instructions on board the Excellent, it affords us real pleasure to have an opportunity of doing justice to the invaluable services of Mr. Charles Stark, the naval instructor of that ship, who from the first has laboured, with a degree of skill, zeal, and patience, beyond all praise, in the arduous department intrusted to his care.

"'The fundamental principles,' continues Sir Howard, 'that should form the basis of any measure that may be adopted for the improvement of naval gunnery, are, that no plan which does not provide for instructing officers, master-gunners, gunners'-mates, and their crews, as well as drilling seamen in the exercise, can effectually improve the service practice. . . . Our only real-service naval gunners are, and must of necessity be, naval officers and seamen; and, in order to render permanent and effectual the benefits that would result from the formation of naval depôts of instruction, a proportion of intelligent seamen should be engaged for a term of years, and formed into a permanent body, from which the more important situations of master-gunners should be filled, and which, in a more extended form, might be made to furnish hereafter a considerable number of expert seamen-gunners to act as captains of guns; or, if not sufficiently numerous to do this, capable, at least, *of soon drilling to the established system the ordinary crews of those vessels into which these trained men may be draughted.*' "In forming establishments of instruction in the practice of naval gunnery," Sir Howard remarks at another place, "it is most assuredly important and indispensable that the vast opportunities which situations of instruction and constant practice offer for the cultivation of improvement, and for the acquirement of great proficiency, should be given to those only who are hereafter to practise, in the profession, on service, what they cultivate and teach in peace. To form depôts of instruction, therefore, of any but naval characters, would be to confer the distinctive encouragement awarded to the cultivators of this great branch of naval science, and the proficiency that must be acquired in teaching it, to a body who could not be called upon to apply those qualities to actual service, without serious and evident inconveniences: for *naval officers* and *seamen* are, and must be, our only real-service *naval gunners*."—(P. 13.)

"The above passages, so pregnant with meaning, have produced admirable effects in practice. In the first place, the establishment for the instruction of the officers and seamen of the Navy has been worked entirely by naval men, and upon the principle of naval discipline. In the next place, commissioned officers, mates, gunners, and seamen in great numbers, have been systematically and thoroughly taught the science and practice of naval gunnery. A regular series of progressive instructions have been framed, through which every officer and man is obliged not merely to pass, but, by rigorous and frequent examinations, to give certain proof of his fully understanding. In like manner, the theoretical courses of instruction have been established; and, by means of monthly, quarterly, and annual examinations, every one is compelled either to learn his business completely, or to leave the ship, and by such act to forfeit the advantages which might attend the acquisition of so perfect a knowledge of naval gunnery as is required on board the Excellent.

"This leads us to mention, thirdly, that, in strict conformity with the principles laid down by Sir Howard Douglas, a certain number of officers and seaman-gunners, duly instructed, are now sent to every ship fitting out, for the purpose of drilling the crews of those ships in the established system. A Lieutenant, a mate, and ten or twelve seamen-gunners, are sent to a line-of-battle ship, a mate and eight seamen-gunners to a frigate, and so on to smaller ships. None of these, however, can leave the ship without what is called 'passing out,' which implies a rigorous examination into every department of knowledge with which a seaman-gunner should be acquainted, including those mathematical rules, and their application, which explain the principle of projectiles—the use of sights—the ready handling, at all times and seasons, of every description of ordnance, including the service of the 10 and 8-inch shell-guns now introduced into Her Majesty's ships—the use of small-arms and cutlasses—all the operations in the magazine—the manufacture of gunpowder, of rockets, tubes, fuses, and all other chemical compositions used in war;—and, lastly, they must show that they not only understand all these things, but that they are capable of teaching to others both their principles and their practical application on board ship.

"It will now be clearly seen, from all we have said, that the grand object of all the various courses of instruction on board the Excellent is not merely to teach naval officers and seamen how to work the guns of a ship themselves, and to understand everything relating to gunnery, but so to instruct both officers and men that *they* may become the teachers of whole ships' companies. Thus, one of the points most insisted upon—namely, that naval men, and naval men only, should eventually be the persons employed to impart a knowledge of naval gunnery to the crews of our men-of-war—was completely attained.

"The principal direction of all the details of the drills, and some of the various courses of instruction on board the Excellent, was vested in the First Lieutenant by Captain Hastings, who was most fortunate in being so ably seconded as he has been. Three of the officers who filled that important office—viz. Lieutenants Richards, Decimus Hastings, and Ward—have been already promoted to the rank of Commander; and we hope ere long to see that accomplished officer, Lieutenant Wilson, who has now the chief direction under Sir Thomas Hastings, in like manner advanced to the rank which his high attainments and long services so well entitle him to*.

"But although, in the spirit of the principle so often adverted to, of making this a genuine *naval* school of gunnery, naval officers have been chiefly

* P.S.—July 1840.—While these sheets are passing through the press, I have learned with the greatest satisfaction that Lieut. Wilson has also been promoted.

employed, the employment of the Royal Marine Artillery, *as assistants*, in the manner recommended by Sir H. Douglas (p. 29), has also been adopted. The late Lieutenant Farrant, of the Royal Marine Artillery, rendered good service by teaching the management of disparting sights, field-piece exercise, the use of sights to the officers and men under instruction, and such other theoretical points in naval gunnery as it was deemed proper to select for the course. Mr. Farrant was succeeded by Lieutenant Engledue, a skilful officer of the Navy. His place was afterwards taken by Lieutenant Thomas Holloway, of the Royal Marine Artillery, who is still on board the Excellent; and it would certainly not be easy to match him anywhere for capacity and zeal, or for that cheerfulness and address which form the great requisites in a teacher of grown-up men. It is interesting, also, on its own account, and very valuable as a point of principle, to know that two of the principal non-commissioned officers, out of the five or six Marine Artillerymen thus employed on board the Excellent, after having served the period which entitled them to a medal, a pension, and to retirement, actually re-entered as *seamen*-gunners on board that ship—exchanged the artillery coat for a sailor's jacket, and are now employed, as heretofore, in giving instructions to the seamen; with this difference, that they are now naval men themselves.

"We are happy, finally, to have it in our power to state that one very important branch of the gunnery course, viz. the Laboratory instruction, has, from the first establishment of the institution, been under the able management of Captain Stevens, a distinguished officer of the Royal Marine Artillery, a gentleman of scientific attainments and long experience in all the branches of the art of war, both scientific and practical, afloat and on shore.

"Under this admirably devised, and no less admirably executed, system of naval gunnery instruction, no fewer than 30 Lieutenants (6 of whom have been promoted), 80 Mates (35 of whom have been promoted), about 50 gunners, and 800 seamen-gunners, have been fully taught and 'passed out' of the Excellent; and these officers and men have carried their knowledge so successfully with them, that we have good authority for stating our fleet in the Mediterranean, and indeed all Her Majesty's ships (except, of course, those very recently put in commision), have been so completely drilled according to the established system, that most of the officers, and every seaman in every ship, may be called—as in a man-of-war he ought to be called—a seaman-gunner.

"In reflecting upon the advantages of this state of things, it can scarcely be necessary to advert to the immense importance, in the event of a war, of having so large a body of officers and men fully instructed in so essential a branch of their business. It has been said, indeed, that after crews have been drilled, and have served their three or four years, they are dispersed and lost, and we have the same thing to go over again. But this, which is in part true, is in the main fallacious; for the mass of seamen employed in the navy pass from one man-of-war to another*. After having spent their money on being paid off, they re-enter the navy in preference to the merchant-service; and therefore the instruction, which costs so much trouble and some expense, is by no means thrown away, notwithstanding the non-existence of a permanent body of seamen-gunners in name as well as in substance, the formation of which we hold to be quite out of the question, as being unsuitable to the character of sailors. In the mean time it is every way valuable to learn that, of the seamen-gunners who have served their first period, no fewer than seventy-five per cent. have actually re-entered for a second term.

"It would carry us quite beyond our limits were we to go as far as our inclination prompts us into the *details* of the gunnery establishment on board the Excellent; but, before concluding this long article, we must dwell for a moment on two important points connected with this subject. The first relates to the encouragement held out to commissioned officers and mates to follow this particular branch of the service, as well as to profit by the advantages of a newly-established college, which is merely an extension of the system on board the Excellent, under the same management, and subject to the same discipline. The other relates to the motives held out to foremast sailors to become seamen-gunners.

"The encouragement to officers to devote themselves especially to the gunnery department consists, chiefly, in the distinction which is conferred upon them by the position they occupy on board the ships they are sent to, either as gunnery lieutenants or gunnery mates—a distinction which, even in peace, as we have seen, leads to promotion in many instances. It is clear, that the gunnery officers, from being more under the eye of the Admiralty, are more likely to have opportunities of bringing themselves into notice, than any other description of officers not actually in command of ships.

"There is much advantage, too, in the opinion of every officer of spirit, in having the means placed within his reach of educating himself thoroughly in so important a branch of his profession. We may add, too, that such has been the nature of the discipline established on board the Excellent, that almost as much is there taught respecting the general duties of a man-of-war, and the feelings and principles of sound order, as there is respecting gunnery and its numerous collateral studies. So that a valuable school of what may be called professional manners, and habits, and principles, in the highest degree gentlemanlike, has been formed, which, under good management, may have a permanent good effect on our naval discipline. To these indirect but not unimportant advantages it may be added, that service as a gunnery Lieutenant qualifies for service as Commander of a line-of-battle ship, in the same degree that service as First Lieutenant of a sloop qualifies. That is to say, three years' service goes for one and a

* The benefit of having established this system of gunnery uniformly throughout the fleet, was shown in a remarkable and instructive manner, when the Flag-ship of the Mediterranean fleet sailed from England. The first time she went to general quarters, the men, though collected together from a great number of different ships, went through their exercises at once, with the most surprising order and precision, as if they had been long serving together.

half—and therefore six years' service as First Lieutenant of a sloop, or as a gunnery Lieutenant, is equivalent to three years' as First Lieutenant of a rated ship.

To all these advantages have lately been superadded those of the Naval College, of which it may suffice at present to mention, that under Captain Sir Thomas Hastings, as head, it has gone into operation with much spirit. A number of the Mates who have passed successfully out of the Excellent, and who alone, as we understand, are eligible, have taken up their quarters in the old college in the dock-yard. This condition rests on the principle that a thorough knowledge of gunnery, as now taught, is, in future, to be considered indispensable in every officer, to render him eligible for promotion. At the college the young men are taught how to navigate a ship, not according to the old, groping, and now obsolete methods of the Hamilton Moore school, but by the scientific rules, and scientific instruments, which modern improvements have introduced at sea. Those who have the capacity and the taste for carrying their mathematical pursuits higher have the means of instruction; and there are several mates now at the college, to whom the differential calculus is familiar. A thorough knowledge of the steam-engine, both in principle and in its application to sea-purposes, is to form an essential part of the college education; and we hear that Captain Williams, a commander on half-pay, and who was himself a student at the college, having made himself well acquainted with steam machinery and steam navigation, voluntarily gave a series of lectures on these subjects at the college, followed up by practical explanations on board Her Majesty's steamer Messenger*.

Modern languages, the art of drawing—and above all, the theory and practice of steam-navigation, will ere long, I have no doubt, form as essential parts of the college course as nautical astronomy does at present. The establishment, however, being as yet only in its infancy, I refrain from entering more into the details of its objects or its practical workings up to this date.

These, so far as we can learn, are the chief topics at present followed at the college, but no doubt it is intended, in the course of time, to append others. In the meanwhile we may just remark, how vast an improvement all this may be expected to produce on the education of naval officers, and how important it is to link together so many branches of their professional knowledge in one regular and uninterrupted course of study; which, beginning with gunnery and ending with navigation, shall be long enough to give him the solid ground-work of useful information, without being so long as to detach him from the genuine hard labour of an active sea-life.

The encouragement held out to seamen to enter on board the Excellent is of a different order, though there cannot be a doubt that the distinction which belongs even to the humbler degree of knowledge imparted to them in that ship has its attraction for generous minds, as it certainly has a direct tendency to steady and otherwise to improve the character of the seaman, and render him a more valuable servant of the public.

The following, copied verbatim from the printed bills, shows the pecuniary advantages:—

"Petty officers and seaman of good character, and under thirty years of age, are entered on board the Excellent for a period of five years, to be instructed as seamen-gunners for Her Majesty's navy, and from them only master-gunners and gunners'-mates will be selected. They will also be preferred for the situation of boatswain, if otherwise qualified, and all the ratings of petty officers will be opened to them. On being discharged from the Excellent into sea-going ships (that is, after being thoroughly instructed, and having passed an examination, and received a certificate to that effect from the Captain), they will receive 2*s*. a-month in addition to able seamen's pay, or to that of any higher rating which they may hold. When their first period of five years expires, on producing certificates of good conduct, they will, if they re-enter immediately, be entitled to 4*s*. a-month in addition to the pay of able seamen, or of any higher rating they may hold; and, at the end of their second period of service, they will, on producing certificates, if they re-enter immediately for another period of five years, receive 5*s*. a-month in addition to the pay of able seamen or of any higher rating they may hold."

These advantages are, of course, over and above the pensions, gratuities, medals for good conduct, and admission to Greenwich Hospital, which the seamen-gunners enjoy in common with the rest of Her Majesty's sailors; and we are happy to find that, hitherto, the motives held out to both officers and men have been such as to keep this invaluable nursery for naval gunnery-officers and for seamen-gunners sufficiently stocked to supply nearly the numbers required to drill and otherwise to perfect in gunnery every ship that has been commissioned since the establishment was placed under the skilful management of Sir Thomas Hastings, in the beginning of 1832.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ON MANNING THE NAVY IN TIME OF WAR.

To pretend that there is no evil in impressment, would be nearly as unreasonable as to assert, that there is no evil in pain, in poverty, or in war itself. But I deny that the evils incident to any of these calamities are unmixed or incapable of alleviation. At all events, I hold it to be philosophical as well as business-like, to look such things fairly in the face. And we ought always to consider two things;—first, how far the practical mischief really extends, what is its nature, and how far it is capable of remedy in itself; and, secondly, how much, and by what means, the most good can be extracted from those parts of the evil which are admitted to be irremediable. It may be all very well for those philanthropic individuals who have no responsibilities to entangle them, and nothing to lose by changes, nor any actual duties to perform, to sit at their ease in their snug closets at home, and find fault with matters abroad. But much mischief may often be done to the cause of real humanity, by such ill-judged declamations, as

* P.S.—July 1840.—I understand that a small steam vessel is shortly to be added to the establishment of the Naval College, for the express purpose of the education of officers in that important department of their rising duties.

we too frequently hear from persons demonstrably ignorant of many of the most important bearings of such subjects.

A distinguished professional writer (Admiral Sir Charles Penrose), when treating of another strongly controverted point, expresses himself in terms with which every candid person must agree. Alluding to some popular orators of the day, he says:—"The mischief which these persons complain of is evident, but the means which they use for the attainment of an assumed good, are wholly at variance with such proposed intention of remedying the evil. I am always more ready," he continues, "to ascribe mistakes in such cases to an erroneous judgment than to a mischievous design. But if those who choose to assume a superior degree in the scale of humanity, or hope to gain a higher step on the tottering ladder of ill-founded popularity, will bring such subjects into public notice, they ought surely to take the pains to be well informed; and yet I venture to assert, that those who have publicly advocated the abolition of the power of inflicting corporal punishment, have spoken in great ignorance both of cause and effect; and, as these gentlemen are by no means devoid of talent, they must stand guilty of a very serious fault in having brought forward a subject so likely to inflame the minds of our seamen, and to render them discontented, without procuring all the information in their power through proper channels*."

The admiral, in the above extract, does not expressly allude, indeed, to impressment, but his admirable pamphlet, coming as it does from one of the most benevolent of men, and most efficient as well as successful of officers, is worthy of attentive perusal by every person who takes an active part in such discussions. The whole of his remarks, however, apply with equal force to the subject of impressment, and in fact are afterwards so used in his work. In all such questions, it is of primary importance to distinguish between what is desirable and what is possible, or between what is quite beyond our reach, and what may perhaps be accomplished by our exertions. If we lose sight of these distinctions, we inevitably waste our time, by missing the points we might hope to hit if we chose to aim aright; and, again, we often do mischief by striking where we should wish not to interfere, and thus too frequently aggravate the evils we desire to remedy.

Some officers, I understand, are of opinion that impressment may in time be entirely done away with. I confess I have scarcely any hopes, nor can I understand how such an expectation can seriously be entertained, by those professional persons who take all the bearings of the case into consideration. A few of the circumstances may be alluded to, as forming obstacles which no ingenuity, I conceive, will ever be able entirely to remove. On the breaking out of a war, when it becomes absolutely necessary to the safety of the country, and for the protection of the national property, that a large fleet of line-of-battle ships and frigates should be manned and equipped immediately, it seems altogether hopeless to expect that any amount of bounty, or other stimulus, will suddenly induce seamen to leave the merchant service and repair to the men-of-war at the moment of need. If it be maintained, that such an expectation is not ill-founded, practical men are entitled to ask for some proof, some experience of a voluntary disposition so contrary to the ordinary habits of the persons we are speaking of. The only resource which can be even imagined, to supply the place of impressment on any such sudden emergency, is to keep a large fleet permanently afloat, ready to act on the breaking out of a war. That is, to maintain in peace a body of twenty or thirty thousand seamen and officers, and ten or fifteen thousand marines, as in the case of the army, sufficient at all events to repel the attempt of an invader, or the ravaging attacks of several squadrons sent out by an active enemy to destroy our shipping and burn our mercantile seaports. London, Cork, Dublin, Liverpool, and Glasgow—not to mention several of our naval arsenals themselves—might readily be demolished before twenty sail of the line could be manned by all the gold in the Bank of England, without impressment.

Again, it may become absolutely necessary for the salvation of our national independence, to gain suddenly and by force from the merchant service into that of the Navy a large accession of fresh strength, after a general action has been fought abroad, or even after some extensive sickness has occurred on board a fleet near or in the presence of an enemy; but I have never heard of any means by which this purpose can be accomplished with that certainty which may become absolutely essential to the preservation of the national honour, and the security of the millions upon millions of property so frequently at hazard in war, which is sure to be sacrificed, if the paramount efficiency of the fleet should be diminished. What is true on the grand scale, when large fleets, and the whole line of coast round Great Britain and Ireland are considered, is not a whit less true, except in degree, in the case of single ships, whose duties may be limited to the defence of a convoy. It has been my fortune to serve in men-of-war abroad, when, from illness and other causes, the crew has been so much reduced that we could hardly have engaged a ship of equal nominal force with much hope of success, without adopting the method of impressment, under circumstances when no conceivable voluntary motive would have been powerful enough to have remanned us.

I beg it will be borne in mind, that I do not deny the great evil, the hardship, even the occasional injustice and cruelty of this practice; but thinking, as I conscientiously do, on this subject, I must not shrink on these accounts from stating what, in spite of all this, I believe to be absolutely essential to the well-being of the Navy, and the honour and safety of the country at large. Nor do I despair of showing, that even the seamen themselves, though they be the chief and immediate sufferers, are by no means the persons least benefited by the results of the present system in the long-run.

I admit, of course, that it is our bounden duty to render impressment as little necessary as possible. But surely the most obvious way to diminish this necessity would be to render the naval service generally popular in itself; and assuredly a great deal has been done of late years towards effecting such an object. This desirable consummation,

* Observations on Corporal Punishment and Impressment. Pp. 1 and 2. London, 4824.

however, is easier wished for than fully accomplished. That we shall ever be able to render thoroughly popular at all times a service which must inevitably be often highly disagreeable and laborious in many of its parts, is a vain and idle expectation. But we may do a great deal to render it less justly unpopular, and to attach firmly and permanently to it a far greater number of its very best servants than we can now command. By such means as I allude to, we may likewise ensure for all our ships, under ordinary circumstances, even in war time, an adequate supply of hands without impressment; and when such sudden exigencies arise as have already been alluded to, requiring the adoption of that painful alternative, we may have the satisfaction of thinking that we have at all events reduced the evil to its lowest degree, by contributing everything in our power to soften the asperity of our coercive employment of the labour of others.

Before considering what measures have recently been adopted, or might still be adopted with advantage, to render the service more popular amongst the seamen, I must mention one point which most people on shore, and even some naval officers, take too little into account: it is, that the merchant seamen themselves, and seamen generally, do not by any means look upon their liability to impressment as any such very grievous hardship as it is presumed they do. They have long complained, and with justice, that after being impressed, they were not dealt with fairly; and there is still some reason, though much less than formerly existed, in these complaints. But this is totally another affair from their objecting to impressment, which I am convinced is not in itself viewed by the sailors in the light supposed by many persons. From the hour they go to sea as boys in a merchant vessel, they become familiarised with the probability, I may almost say certainty, of being impressed into his Majesty's service; all their measures are taken in that expectation, and the risk I speak of enters into the calculation of their parents as well as their own throughout their whole career. It is indeed alleged that many lads are prevented from becoming sailors by the fear of impressment. I do not believe this; at all events, I do not imagine that more boys are deterred from going to sea by this apprehension than are scared from it by the dangers of shipwreck or battle. I do not deny that sailors do all they can to avoid being pressed into the Navy, or that the risk does not influence them in their demand for wages in the merchant service. Beyond a doubt, it directs their line of employment, and becomes a part and parcel of all their thoughts, conversation, and habits; but, practically speaking, it influences their happiness no more than the possible evils of the yellow fever, or the chances of a French prison. I do not say that, abstractedly speaking, this lessens the injustice of taking a fellow-subject and free man from an occupation he prefers, to another which he dislikes, and making him labour for smaller wages than he might perhaps earn were he left alone. I wish to blink no part of this question. An argument that will not stand such shot is not worth defending. I pretend not that we have strict or abstract reasoning on our side, but simply, that in practice we find a system established, which, in certain respects, works admirably—which is vitally essential to our well-being as a nation, until a substitute shall be found, but for which no substitute has yet been proposed that seems practicable—while this system, in the apprehension of those most concerned, the seamen, is, in fact, looked upon as one of those evils which belong naturally and inevitably to the profession of their free choice. I verily believe they consider it no more capable of correction, than that the troubled nature of the element upon which they have made their election to pass their lives can be rendered smooth. Thus, a boy chooses to become a sailor in the merchant service; he is warned of the risk of impressment; his mother descants on the chances of being cast away, or of being killed in battle; he laughs at all these things, and says he will take his chance. He therefore goes to sea, and, with his eyes open through life, he still chooses, all things considered, to incur these varied risks. The advantages, in short, predominate, in his opinion, over the evils. The life is to his taste; he objects not to the excitement of danger, and he perseveres.

Every other profession whatsoever has, in like manner, its numerous drawbacks as well as its advantages, and that of the sea is by no means an exception to the rule; nor, upon the whole, does there seem any reason to suppose that the sailors themselves consider it, comparatively, a bad profession, even when they take into account all the evils of impressment.

To compensate for a certain degree of the loss of liberty, the naval service has very many advantages over that of the merchant service. But, even at the worst, it may well be questioned whether people on shore, in the same rank of life as sailors, do in fact enjoy more, or even so much, real liberty, or many higher advantages in other respects, than are enjoyed by our men-of-war sailors. Still less do seamen on board merchant ships enjoy more real liberty. I believe that few of any description of the labouring classes are so well off as sailors; and assuredly the tasks of merchant seamen and labourers on shore are harder, and their comforts vastly inferior to those of naval sailors. At all events, I feel quite sure, that the crew of a tolerably well-regulated ship in his Majesty's service, consisting, we shall suppose, exclusively of pressed men, would scorn to exchange situations with any equal number of their labouring fellow-citizens on shore—I mean of those born to the same expectations. This, surely, is the true and only business-like way of viewing the question. For the comforts of sailors are, generally speaking, and especially in the Navy, much greater than those of labourers on shore. The treatment they receive is less irksome; they visit the whole world; and, as I shall endeavour to show, they may with advantage be permitted almost always to enjoy many of those luxuries most suited to their tastes and habits. Of these, the labourer on shore enjoys few or none. What is more to the purpose, the sailors are not only happy in themselves, but admit the fact. I do not say this is invariably the case. We are not angels, but men; and all climates are not like those between the tropics; nor is the service of blockading Toulon for twenty months at a stretch, without dropping the anchor, so agreeable as cruising amongst the Azores, and catching up

prizes by the dozen! But, by and by comes the glorious delight—the master luxury of such a battle as Trafalgar, which compensates in three hours for three years of dodging off and on, watching fellows afraid to show their noses till shovelled out by the orders of Napoleon, only to get smashed to pieces by Nelson. This reminds me of Greenwich Hospital for our wounded warriors, and our pensions for those veterans who have served their country faithfully—to say nothing of Haslar during sickness, and a hundred other advantages of which the merchant service has none.

These opinions, though by no means singular, are not, I grant, universally held by officers; but I positively declare that I have never yet been able to learn from the seamen themselves, that, all things considered, the total abolition of impressment is looked upon by them as desirable. Every reflecting man amongst them—and these are far more numerous than we are apt to suppose—is, I really believe, perfectly convinced, that as the nation, at moments of exigency, is obviously entitled to the services of every one of its subjects, seamen inclusive, the country cannot possibly do without impressment, and that this power never can, and never will, nor ought to be given up. Men, therefore, who embark in any of the various departments of the profession of the sea, do in point of fact, and must continue to take this contingency into account as one of the hardships of their calling, and be prepared to meet it, like cold, wet, fatigue, and the numberless privations incident to their rugged occupation. Since the improvements of modern years have been introduced, the unpopularity of the Navy has been gradually abating; and I am strongly persuaded, that, at this moment. it lies within our power to render the naval service permanently popular; or, to speak cautiously, to render it, gradually, less unpopular; and thus, of course, to render impressment less and less of an evil in real practice, as well as in appearance, whatever it may remain in abstract theory.

That this is the true method of discussing such a question, I should hope would be conceded by all who sincerely wish to do good, without any ostentatious ambition of being thought more philanthropic than their neighbours. If the existence of this evil be essential to our national safety, that is, if, upon some occasions, we must have recourse to the impress, to avoid evils ten times more serious,—let us at least manfully gird up our loins for the only fair exertion that remains to men of business to consider. Let us see what can be done to remove practical obstacles to improvement, and to dislodge, or, at all events, to sap, those well-founded objections to the naval service which admit of alteration, without at the same time risking what is essential to its efficiency and the safety of the country. To attempt more is to work at the wrong end, and in the wrong spirit. Lamentable, indeed, to our naval honour and national independence will be the consequences, immediate and remote, if, in these days of political experimenting and headlong change, when people fondly hope to perform in a few months the work of as many centuries, we shall rashly part, on a sudden, with our long-established power of impressment. Before we venture upon such a measure we must devise a substitute; and the true substitute I take to be, the introduction, gradually, of those ameliorations into our naval system which alone, in the opinion of experienced practical men, afford a fair ground for hoping that voluntary service may in time take the place of impressment. Any sudden and uncompensated alteration in the method of manning the fleet, at the breaking out of a war, will be made at prodigious cost to the nation, not merely in money, but in that which money cannot buy—national renown, and its consequent security. A return to the old system—too hastily abandoned—will then be our only salvation; but the fearful danger is, that when once the sanction of established usage has been broken in upon, the materials of which it was formed will be found not merely separated—they will have been annihilated. The complicated web of old customs, which, when entire, is irresistibly strong, will fall instantly to pieces when a single mesh is cut. Unfortunately, to re-weave such a system will require an equal length of time; or, if the urgency be great, its re-establishment must necessarily be accomplished at the expense of tenfold irritation to the parties who have been thus busily instructed in the mysteries of their own strength of resistance. Even when the seamen held in their hands the power almost of dictation (I allude to the great mutinies of the Nore and Spithead), they never once dreamed of the abolition of impressment. To talk, therefore, of that as a flagrant abuse requiring immediate and total correction, which the parties most interested look upon as an evil incapable of absolute remedy, so long as England is an island and her trade extends over the whole world—is, to say the least of it, an officious sort of humanity. But when, in addition, it appears very probable, that by the abolition of the power of impressment, the evil would not be removed but speedily aggravated, the imprudence of such meddling is enormously increased.

It signifies little or nothing to say that the Americans have not resorted to impressment. The small number of their ships, and the shortness, as well as popularity of the war in which they were engaged, together with the entire stoppage of their commerce, rendered the practice unnecessary. But that vigorous-minded nation will not be deterred by any abstract injustice in the matter, or feel the smallest scruple, we may well be assured, in adopting the only method by which, when the occasion shall require it, a large fleet can be suddenly equipped for sea.

It is far more agreeable, and, I trust, likely to be more useful in practice, to leave these irritating and debateable branches of the subject, for the grateful consideration of those improvements in our system, in the object and principle of which all men are agreed—however much diversity may exist amongst officers and other persons who have given their attention to these things, as to the best method of accomplishing purposes admitted to be so eminently desirable.

It may be useful, however, first to take a glance at the existing state of the evil, that we may see how far the circumstances are different from those which we have had to contend with in times past. For if these be essentially changed, it is not enough to say that in former wars the impressment answered its purpose, and worked well in

the long-run, by enabling us to annihilate the fleets of our antagonists. Even if it were so, and we could reckon upon accomplishing as great things in future, by the assistance of the impress, as we have done heretofore, still, every person who is acquainted with the details must wish that an evil, which rests exclusively on a deserving class of the community, should be alleviated to the utmost extent of our means. But this obligation becomes still more imperative upon us, when the effect of time has been to change many of the circumstances so materially, that it may be very much doubted if the power in question can be relied upon to any safe extent in the event of future wars. I mean, without some modification in itself, and some material collateral adjustments, to fit the whole to the altered state of the times. The materials are the same, and the importance of employing them is the same. Sailors are sailors still, and in almost all their leading characteristics, are likely to continue unchanged; and as long as our national position is insular at head-quarters, but our dependencies, spread over the whole globe, are kept in communication by the broad highway of the ocean, we must, in order to preserve our national character—not to say existence—never fail to recollect, that it is chiefly to armed fleets that we can look for our own defence, and that of the colonies, which it is in the highest degree unwise to consider in any other light than as integral parts of the empire.

The question, then, of manning, equipping, and maintaining at sea in proper efficiency the requisite number of ships of war, not only to guard our own shores, but to keep the course clear for the race of our commerce, is one of the most momentous that can well occupy the attention of statesmen, as well as of professional persons. And it seems to form an essential part of the duty of persons who have attended to the subject, to point out to public attention those features of the case which experience has taught them are deserving of careful examination.

In addressing myself to this subject, which on many accounts may well be called terrific, I feel no small degree of embarrassment, and, I must add, of apprehension. My diffidence, however, on this occasion, arises not from any distrust of the correctness of the views which I have learned to entertain, or any doubt of the efficacy of the means which have been proposed to meet the occasion, but solely from an apprehension that I may not do justice to the subject in the expression of those opinions. In discussing incidentally a topic of such great extent, and in some of its most important details so strictly technical, in a manner likely to be intelligible to general readers, many things must of necessity be altogether left out, or only touched upon slightly, which, in the opinion of other persons, ought to have been considered at length. And yet, unless a pretty comprehensive view be taken of the points at issue, and at the same time many of the details be well understood, there can be little hope of the subject meeting fair play, either from those who are conscious of knowing and caring little about the matter, or from those who, without perhaps much more information than their neighbours, have already made up their minds to view it in a particular manner.

As a professional man who has paid some attention to these matters, I feel extremely unwilling to let slip an opportunity of placing a subject of first-rate national importance in what I conceive to be its true light, difficult and painful though the task may be. Were its evils quite hopeless, and the palliatives, if not remedies, placed so far beyond the reach of practical application, that none but a visionary could reckon upon a cure, it would be equally wicked and absurd to expose the misery of impressment. But when, in the opinion of some of the best-informed professional authorities, an obvious course of improvement lies before us, striking indirectly, but vigorously, at the very root of the evil, the difficulty is greatly diminished.

I am not sure that in what I have to say anything very new will be advanced; but I shall be satisfied if I can condense the most material parts of what has been so ably stated at length by Vice-Admiral Sir Charles Penrose and Captain Griffiths, whose pamphlets on impressment, corporal punishments, and other subjects connected with seamanship and naval economy, I cannot too strongly recommend to officers of every age and rank in the service*.

These writers appear agreed, that impressment, or rather the power to impress seamen, cannot safely be given up; since certain occasions may arise when there would not be time to wait for the means of national defence afforded by volunteering men for the Navy. Actual invasion, or the expectation of it—the destruction of a fleet—the imminent hazard of our colonies or commerce—and several other possible cases may occur, in which the safety of the country demands the promptest measures; and then, of course, the few must yield to the many. Unhappily, however, we cannot deny, that, from a variety of circumstances, a great disinclination, and, in some instances, a disgust to the naval service, has arisen amongst merchant-seamen, which it is of vast importance to counteract, and, if possible, altogether to remove. But to eradicate such prejudices requires a considerable time: and they never will be shaken unless the groundwork of discontent upon which they rest be taken away. Then, and not till then, the gradual operation of experience will commence. And if proper improvements, adopted in the genuine spirit of fairness to the seamen, be persevered in with perfect good faith, there can be little doubt of their inspiring eventually that degree of mutual confidence which has been so much wanted. The superior comforts and advantages of the Navy, even now, above those of the merchant-service, are very considerable; but their attraction is nearly overpowered by forces pulling in an opposite direction. It is the chief purpose of the present inquiry to investigate these retardations or impediments to the smooth working of our system, with a view to their removal; or, which would be better still, to the application of these forces to the right purpose, so that they may act with us instead of against us.

* Observations on Corporal Punishment and Impressment, by Vice-Admiral Sir Charles Penrose, K.C.B. 1824. Impressment fully considered, with a view to its gradual Abolition, by Capt. Anselm John Griffiths, R.N. 1826. Also, Observations on some points of Seamanship, with practical Hints on Naval Economy, by Capt. Griffiths. 1828. 2nd edition.

There is reason to suppose, that it will be far easier for seamen to evade the impress in the event of war, than it used to be in former times. The independence of the United States, was the first circumstance which materially changed our position in this respect; and of late years, the rapid growth of commerce on the other side of the Atlantic, has given facilities to our seamen to escape from the impress, for which the right of search, however enforced, affords but a small compensation. No one who has not served on the coast of North America, can have an adequate idea how effectual an asylum is afforded by the common origin and a common language, as well as similarity of manners, to persons who have a strong love of change. Sailors, indeed, are so much accustomed to rove over the world, that they have little scruple about expatriating themselves, and they are too often indifferent about the means by which the requisite subterfuges may be effected. The angry recriminations and interchange of mutual bad offices between the Americans and us, which led to the last bitter war, gave that nation a still higher interest in rendering their country a place of refuge for our seamen; and it has now, from one cause and another, become a matter of the utmost ease for any seaman to protect himself falsely by the immunities of an American-born citizen. All this, which, of course, renders impressment a much less effectual means of supply, only makes it of more importance to us to fall upon methods of manning our ships, as much as possible, without the instrumentality of such a practice.

How far we may insist upon exercising the right of search on board American ships, and those of other nations, when we come again to require men,—or how long those countries may submit to it, without bringing the matter to the issue of war, are questions difficult to answer. But one thing seems clear, that every such search must now be exercised with greater moderation than formerly, and must in every view prove less efficient as a means of procuring seamen, while the asylum afforded by the American flag is immensely larger than it was, and more easily taken advantage of.

All this, I conceive, is quite consistent with what I have said of our seamen being, in point of fact, comparatively indifferent to impressment. It is not to the particular method by which they are brought into the Navy that they have hitherto objected, but to the service itself. If their condition on board our ships be still further improved, I conceive most of their objections would vanish; and, although the power of using the impress, as a last resource, can never with safety be abolished, it may very well cease to act as a bugbear to seafaring folks.

Among the various causes enumerated by Captain Griffiths, for the diminished efficiency of this source of equipping a fleet, he mentions the legal obstacles which, in all probability, will in future be interposed to our taking men from privateers, in consequence of the spirit of resistance to such arbitrary interference with the affairs of our fellow-subjects, which is every day gaining ground, and which (if once the spirit alluded to is fairly roused) will cross the impressor's path at every step. Heretofore, the custom has been allowed to pass current, chiefly because it affected only one class of the community; but a disposition to think, feel, and act for others, has, he conceives, taken the place of this indifference in the public mind of late years; and, if once it fastens its attention on the evils of impressment, there is no difficulty in foretelling the proximate result, whatever may ultimately prove the consequence.

There is much to awaken the attention, I confess, in this reasoning; but nothing, as I think, seriously to alarm us. The paramount necessity of manning a fleet in time of war will remain, or become, in seasons of danger, as apparent to the country at large as ever it was; and the same resources will, with certain modifications, be then drawn upon, without much dispute, as in all times past. The increased size of our vessels of war, renders more men necessary to fight the same number of ships, while there appears no reason to suppose that our fleets and squadrons, in any quarter of the globe, can well be smaller than formerly. It is thought that the multitude of steam-boats, which work along the coasts of these islands, must interfere with the nursery for seamen. I think they will have a contrary effect. Steam-boat sailors are very good sailors, when, as with us, their service is chiefly at sea, and not, as in America, where it is confined exclusively to rivers. Very little of our coasting trade is carried on by steamers; and the good old colliers will continue always to convey the material which sets the steam in action. There is some reason, however, to fear, that the recent alteration in our navigation laws, by which foreign shipping has been so much encouraged in our ports, has diminished the number of our effective seamen. In the present rage for chopping and changing, and making the most of every available halfpenny, it must often be impossible to decide beforehand what will be the eventual effect of any such measure. But the relinquishment of regulations, framed expressly to keep up the numbers of the seafaring portion of our community, to the exclusion of foreigners, as might have been anticipated, has, I understand, sensibly diminished their numbers. Whether or not correspondent, or even greater economical advantages have been gained, is not the question at present. Captain Griffiths is not of opinion that any regular diminution in the numbers of our native seamen has taken place of late years; but he seems to think, that we are never likely to have at our command so many foreigners for the use of the Navy as during the last war. At that period, he justly remarks, by the joint operation of Buonaparte's continental system and our orders in council, together with the capture and destruction of most of their navies, and the total bar we put to their commerce, foreign seamen were necessarily driven out of employ in vast numbers, who were glad to accept the pay we gave them in our men-of-war.

I suspect that the evils of impressment, as an abstract question of right and justice, have never been formally considered by the seamen themselves. Captain Griffiths, however, whose experience has been extensive, and whose authority is entitled to the highest respect, thinks the sailors have always considered them oppressive. He appears also to think, that this class will not long

form an exception in the universal desire which prevails, since the "march of intellect" began its movement, for reducing everything to the scale of positive reason and right. Heretofore, he also conceives, the public at large felt little or no sympathy for the classes liable to impress, but now this sympathy is general. I am not of opinion that there is any material change in these respects. At the same time, it must be owned, that if the seamen of a fleet of twenty or thirty sail of the line, skilfully prompted by reckless agitators, in and out of Parliament, were to take it into their heads to discuss the evils of impressment, the doctrine of prescriptive usage, or even the old and solemn appeal to "state necessity," might lose much of their wonted force in these feverish days of reform.

All this, however, only renders the question of more importance than ever, and proves it to be one of vital consequence to our well-being as a maritime state. The difficulty ought not to be evaded by urging the improbability of its recurrence, but rather be viewed manfully on its own merits. In so considering matters, we should recollect the formidable danger which the nation would incur, by the loss of a power which at present is not only not disputed by the seamen, but which I most sincerely believe is not, in itself, looked upon as a great practical evil by the parties themselves. If, as I believe, most of those eventual consequences of impressment which constitute nearly its whole evil, are remediable, it is to them we should address ourselves, in the spirit of true reformers. We should not seek to make things better which are already working well, but rather try to correct evils which are not only considered to be such by those who are most nearly concerned, but which often work so ill as to threaten the destruction of the whole machinery.

I confess that the occurrences amongst the seamen at Shields and elsewhere, a few years ago, and indeed the whole current of public affairs of late, conspire to prove that, whether for good or for evil, a spirit has got abroad for discussing such questions, which it may be difficult to manage at any time, and might be altogether impossible to control at the moment of greatest need, unless maturely considered in good season.

"Those who can calmly contemplate these chances," remarks Captain Griffiths, "possess nerves to which I candidly own myself a stranger." To this manly avowal, most officers who have watched attentively the progress of causes and effects for the last twenty or twenty-five years, will be disposed to say—Amen!

But it is time to come closer to the remedial part of the subject, and to learn what are the causes of this unfortunate want of popularity in His Majesty's naval service in war, when every other branch of the public employment, and likewise of almost all private employments—many of them not half so well paid, and not one of them so comfortable in most respects—are perpetually overstocked with hands.

So sanguine am I on this point, that I live in confident hopes of seeing the day arrive, when it will be considered by seamen a favour to be admitted into the Navy, and a disgrace to be turned out.

CHAPTER XXIV.

IMPROVEMENTS IN THE NAVAL SYSTEM CALCULATED TO LEAD TO THE GRADUAL DISUSE OF IMPRESSMENT.

It has been sometimes supposed, that our discipline is the cause of the unpopularity of the naval service; but there seems little ground for this opinion, and certainly it is not an objection urged by the seamen themselves. There are, no doubt, ships to which sailors object, on account of the severity of the rule, as there are regiments unpopular to soldiers on that score. In the same way, schools, and even private families may be found, in civil life, where defects of temper, good sense, or good manners in the chief authorities, are the cause of much discomfort and merited unpopularity. But a very little inquiry will show that it is not to the well-regulated strict discipline of the Navy to which the men object.

It is known that the best regulated ships during the last war and since, have always been the most popular amongst the men; and it was from those ships in which there was most leave given, that the smallest number of desertions took place, at least amongst that portion of the crew whom it was desirable to keep. The reason of this is plain enough. In a ship where the discipline is slack, almost the whole burden of hard work falls upon the good and willing men, while the worthless and skulking fellows shirk their duty. Besides which, it must happen, when several hundred men of such habits as seamen possess are brought together into so small a space as a ship, that unless there be some well-understood and well-enforced system of coercion ready at all times to repress the turbulent and dissipated, a man-of-war must and does become a most disagreeable residence. In short, those who have the misfortune to find themselves on board what is called an easy-going ship, have anything but an easy time of it.

When it is recollected from what sphere of life our crews are taken, and the loose principles and manners which belong to that branch of it from which they are chiefly picked out, it will readily be seen how essential, even to their own comfort, it is that good order should be enforced. In point of fact, the seamen themselves freely admit that they are far better off in this respect in a man-of-war than in a merchant vessel. In the mutinies at the Nore and Spithead in 1797, there was no question on this point, for the discipline was kept up by the ringleaders, exactly according to the rules and customs of the Navy, except that their corporal punishments were somewhat more severe. The seamen, indeed, are perfectly well aware that, all things considered, there can be no essential change made in the system which will not be worse for them. There have, no doubt, been very considerable improvements introduced of late years, and there seems still room for others; butthat is not now the question, for it is not to this point, as far as I have been able to learn from the seamen themselves, that they object. It is, at all events, quite notorious, that the discipline on board the American ships of war, in which some of our men entered, was much more severe than with us. It is a curious fact, also, mentioned by Captain Griffiths, that during the war, when the ordinary mer-

chant-ships were giving the enormous pay of £4 10*s.* and £5 a-month for seamen, in the East India Company's ships—in which the discipline approaches to that of the Navy—no higher rate of wages was given than £2 5*s.* "Here was a sacrifice of pecuniary interest to something; in honest truth," says Captain Griffiths, "we are unable to assign any reason but the comfort of increased order, regularity, and steadier discipline. The East Indiaman in these respects was a minor man-of-war."—*Griffiths on Impressment*, p. 45.

There are various minor causes of discontent in the Navy, all susceptible of remedy, but which it is not necessary that I should discuss at present. The two grand sources, however, as it appears to me, from which the unpopularity of our service springs, and without removing which it will be in vain to hope for much amelioration of the impress, are, first, the manner in which the seaman's wages are paid—or rather, not paid; and, secondly, the long and irksome confinement to which the men are generally subjected. It seems of the highest importance that these two branches of our system should be fully understood by those who really wish well to the Navy, and desire to see the impress disused, as far as the safety, honour, and welfare of His Majesty's dominions will allow. I shall, therefore, confine myself to a glance at these two leading obstacles to our popularity, being convinced, that if they were removed, many other minor arrangements might be safely adopted for doing away almost entirely with the practice of impressment, although the right, or reserved power to employ it, should never be relinquished. It might be risking too much to venture upon many other useful changes, while such huge stumbling-blocks stand in our way. For example, limited service, and a lower scale of pensions, to be earned in shorter periods, and progressively increasing bounties on further voluntary enlistment. These, together with occasional medals and gratuities for important public services, might be adopted, to place our seamen on a fair footing with the privates in the army. Badges of distinction have lately been given to the seamen who are raised to the rank and responsibilities of petty officers, similar to those worn by corporals and sergeants, and the effect has been very great. There are many other similar points of detail—implying confidence in the men, and respect for their feelings—which might follow as matters of course, if we could only break down that systematic want of confidence forced upon us by the present method of paying our seamen, and by the degree of confinement to which they are liable to be subjected.

Before taking one step, however, in this march of improvement in our naval system, we must resolve, at all hazards, to keep up the character of the profession, and never again allow it to be degraded by the flagitious custom of sending men into our ships of war who have either been found guilty of crimes by the civil authorities, or against whom such strong suspicions exist that, rather than stand a trial, the culprit is allowed to choose the alternative of a jail or a king's ship! The simple fact of such a choice being ever suggested, was always felt by the profession at large as a gross insult. And there can be no doubt, that while it acted as a serious deteriorater or degrader to the whole service, it indirectly, but seriously, increased the very difficulty it was intended to lessen.

This nefarious practice has been discontinued since the termination of the war; and I trust it will never, in any extremity, be resorted to again. Up to the present time, however, a certain number of smugglers have been sent on board His Majesty's ships sailing to foreign stations. The average, I believe, has been about sixty men annually, who were compelled to serve for five years, as a punishment for having broken the revenue laws. But although these people were legally guilty of an offence against the state, it was not one which was currently considered, in the sailors' class of society, or indeed in any class, as very disgraceful, though it led to horrid crimes; and, consequently, our crews did not feel themselves degraded by the introduction of such persons amongst them, especially as they were generally very fine fellows, and prime seamen. When they were fully trusted, they very seldom if ever betrayed the confidence reposed in them; at least, none that I have ever had to deal with deceived me, though I never imposed more restraints upon them, after leaving England, than upon the rest of the crew. I rejoice, however, to learn that the Admiralty have decided upon totally discontinuing this practice; so that even smugglers will no longer be sent on board ships of war as a punishment.

How was it possible that well-conditioned men should look to the Navy as a respectable profession, when they were made to work, and even to associate familiarly, with the offscourings of jails!—with fellows who, having proved too rascally and too adroit for the civil magistrate, were sent to us to keep in order! It is true, we have ways and means of bringing such bad subjects into habits of comparative order and obedience; but we cannot scourge out of them the leaven of the school in which they have been brought up. I have known one thief upset the internal tranquillity of a whole ship. But if, as I fully believe, the cat-o'-nine tails be the only method of dealing with these incorrigible fellows, whom the civil magistrates in former times so unceremoniously got rid of by sending to a man-of-war, I wish to ask, why should the same wholesome discipline, which alone is effectual in controlling such persons, not be administered within the walls of the prison, instead of a man-of-war! If these rogues were well punished on the spot, and as soon after their crime as possible, the example might work some reform on parties tending towards similar courses, but not yet beyond recall.

Every officer of experience knows how difficult it is "to break the neck of thieving," as it is forcibly expressed, when once the practice gets into a ship. It is a sort of moral dry-rot, which is only to be got rid of by the total change of the crew. A single pickpocket, like a single fungus in the mysterious disease alluded to, may have power to spread its poison, and contaminate a whole ship's company—or, if not actually to demoralise them, at least to break up their comforts, by shaking their confidence in one another, and in some degree in themselves; for men who are habitually, and as a matter of public duty, called upon to sit down to table and to work in company with persons of notoriously bad character, can hardly feel for themselves that degree of

respect, without which there can be no steady rectitude.

A skilful and practised thief cast amongst such an unsuspicious set of fellows as a ship's crew, takes good care to lay the scene of his depredations at a distance from his own mess, and from the place where his own hammock is hung up. Thus, suspicion almost certainly takes its origin in the wrong quarter; and as the true rogue contrives to suit his measures to the circumstances of the case, he finds no difficulty in misdirecting inquiries, and helping to fasten doubts on persons who know not how to extricate themselves from the evidence by which they are entangled. Suspicion once engendered, the feeling of distrust flies about the ship, and inflames the minds of the crew. The evil also was speedily aggravated by the formation of a gang, who acted under the master-villain so generously bestowed upon us by the civil authorities; and as these gangs generally consisted of the youngest boys in the ship, the cruel axe of the destroyer was laid at the very roots of our social system afloat. This is no exaggeration, but truly what too many of us have seen; and, therefore, so far from taking measures for imparting poison to our fleet, the utmost care should be used to eradicate all such stains, and to expel, with scorn and disgust, every disreputable character from our ships.

My friend Captain Griffiths, although he differs from me materially on the subject of impressment, agrees, I am happy to find, in most other points of this discussion. In the course of our correspondence on these points, he has furnished me with many valuable suggestions, and also the following anecdote, which places the mischief of introducing black sheep amongst us in a striking light.

"An extraordinary case of a thorough-going plunderer of everything within his reach occurred in His Majesty's ship Topaze, while I had that ship. All our plans to detect him were very long unavailing; at length I apprised the first lieutenant of my intention to endeavour to catch the party or parties off their guard. When a new theft was reported, I privately directed the complainant not to say anything more about it; and then declared aloud, before such as were in hearing, that it was of little use complaining to me—I had tried in vain, and the detection must rest with themselves. The ship was at sea, and I took no farther notice for a fortnight, when, as usual, we piped to dinner, from which nothing was ever allowed to disturb the men but imperious necessity. About twenty minutes afterwards, the hands were turned up in a hurried manner, everybody sent aft, the mids and officers put on the guns to oversee all, while the people were kept in the centre, till a thorough search was made of all the bags, chests, and hammocks. The theft, however, was not detected; but, to my surprise, in one man's chest was found notes, gold, and silver, to the amount, I think, of sixty-four pounds. The ship was then in the Mediterranean. The owner was a half-and-half sort of fellow, only rated landsman, and a kind of 'yea and nay man' apparently. As this sum struck all of us with surprise, the man was called on openly, before the assembled crew, publicly to account for its possession. He really gave a specious detail; so much so, that I was quite at fault, and addressed the men on the subject, telling them that it was their interest to detect the thief, who had so long revelled in plundering them. 'You know this man,' I said, 'his habits, his means, &c., much better than I can. I call upon any and all of you to say what you know of him, and to give your opinions. While I am most anxious to detect him, if the thief, I shall be still more pleased to find him an honest man.' A dozen men, one after the other, came forward, and at last a general belief was expressed by the others, of his story being true, and certainly not one of them thought him a thief. The general declaration was, that he was a miser—'If he is on shore with his shipmates,' said they, 'he will call for a pint of beer, and pass the day with little farther expense.' The money was returned to him; and as they went down to finish their dinners, I publicly told him, 'You retire without charge against you.' I left the ship some months after. More thieving went on; and, perhaps nine months afterwards, this very fellow was fully detected, and lots of plunder discovered. The purser, Mr. Chimmo, sent me two books of mine, and a pocket handkerchief. Here was an extraordinary case of successful concealment, without even suspicion, among his compeers."

How it has happened that so ruinous—I may call it nefarious and degrading a practice—as that of sending felons to our ships of war, was allowed to exist so long, in the teeth too of many urgent remonstrances of practical men, I never could understand. And, after all, what is it but an affected and spurious humanity on the part of the civil authorities on land, to avoid, forsooth, the odium of corporally punishing ragamuffins who have no other feelings to touch but those of the body—who are insensible to shame, and whom nothing but the fear of the lash will ever keep in decent order. Were all such persons duly chastised (in strict justice, but with no mock lenity), either publicly near the scenes of their iniquity, or in the jails, where their colleagues should be compelled to witness the consequences of their crimes, I am well convinced that a far more efficacious check would be put to crime than can ever be afforded by the costly, and rather tempting, punishment, as it is miscalled, of banishment, or the protracted and expensive degradation, high feeding, and very easy labour, of the hulks and penitentiaries.

I am well aware that this recommendation may be thought unfeeling, and be represented, by persons partially informed of the facts, as savouring of the stern school afloat. But I beg it may be recollected, that the system alluded to was, after all, essentially a subterfuge—a mere shifting of the burden from one pair of shoulders to another. Whenever a magistrate, good soul! in his tender mercy, shrunk from whipping a thief in the county jail, he felt no sort of scruple in packing him off to sea, where, in all probability, he received a much more severe dose of discipline than might have been necessary to his reformation, had his case been promptly and judiciously treated on shore.

At all events, without wandering further into these angry speculations, I trust we shall never again, in any extremity, be driven to such mischievous methods of manning our ships. At the

very best, the total numbers of men so transported to us formed but a small portion of the hundred and thirty thousand seamen required, during the war, in the Navy. For the purposes of strength they were quite inefficient, while for those of mischief they were abundant enough in all conscience!

It cannot be too strongly or too frequently impressed upon the minds of commanding-officers, that their first resource in discipline, and the most certain element of their strength in action, will ever be found in the fair character of the people under them. The men themselves feel this deeply and perpetually, and will eagerly co-operate with their superiors in detecting and ridding the ship of bad subjects, if the principle be once fully established on board that men of character only are deemed fit for His Majesty's service, and that blackguards ought to be turned out of it. The Admiralty, too, should be ready at all times to join with their officers in this good work; and, by the joint operation of rewards and punishments to those who remain on board, and the expulsion of the incorrigible, contribute to keep up the character of the crews as much as possible. That this feeling influences the proper authorities, and has for some years done so, I have seen abundant evidence; but the best proof of such a disposition being sincere, lies in actually adopting measures in the real spirit of improvement. Much, assuredly, has been done of late to add to the comfort and respectability of the men; but there are still some measures of great importance, which, without additional cost to the nation, might go very far to render the naval service popular. Our advantages in the Navy are already, in many of the most material respects, superior to those of every other service afloat, and this is freely admitted by the parties most concerned. Still there are two or three drawbacks, which tend to neutralise these benefits, and conspire to attach a degree of unpopularity to the Navy which, I think, might and ought to be removed.

CHAPTER XXV.

LEAVE TO GO ON SHORE—THE LIBERTY BOOK—JACK'S STRONG-BOX.

THE preceding remarks lead naturally to another very important branch of the service and its discipline—I mean that of giving men leave to go on shore; and here, also, I conceive that the intervention of the proper authorities might be employed most usefully. As a general rule, unquestionably, the more the responsibility of the captain is left undivided the better. He must in most cases be the best judge of what is right and fitting to be done; but although we should interfere with the details of his discipline as little as possible, in order to fix the due weight of responsibility upon him, still there may be occasions of general legislation so important that superior authority ought to assume the initiative, and direct, in as general terms as may be, the establishment of a system by which all her Majesty's ships might be regulated, as far as those points admit of uniform regulation.

Captains, I conceive, should be officially recommended to give their ships' companies leave to go on shore at every port they touch at, and under every circumstance, when the nature of the service renders such a measure not altogether inexpedient. Nor, perhaps, ought the period of leave to be confined to twenty-four hours, when the situation of the ship admits of a longer term of absence. In fact, everything should be done to prove to the seamen that, when on board a king's ship, they are not in a place of confinement, and that every reasonable indulgence will be given them, while all that is required of them in return is energy and good conduct. I would even go further, and prescribe it as a regulation, very rarely to be infringed, that "stopping leave" should not be made a punishment, but that, at all times, when the public service would allow of any portion of the crew being on shore, leave should be granted, as a matter of course, to every man and boy in the ship, like the allowance of provisions, subject, exactly as that allowance is, to diminution on occasions of need, but not otherwise to be trenched upon.

"Let us view the subject as a mere matter of policy," says Captain Griffiths, "and I have little doubt but the Records of the Navy Office would at once bear out the personal experience, that those ships wherein the greatest portion of leave on shore was given, ever present the smallest list of deserters, perhaps the largest portion of volunteers, reduced punishments, and less sickness. On the effects of mind on health it would be idle to dwell; and men who, having been impressed into the service, are dissatisfied at being kept often two or three years (sometimes longer) without liberty to go on shore, must have theirs rankling with those feelings which, if they do not produce sickness, will never fail to strengthen and extend its effects. If, instead of finding excuses to withhold leave from fear of desertion, it were not only generally granted, but opportunities to give it sought after, and not confined to the mere run on shore of twenty-four hours, but, as far as possible, extended to men going home, no matter the distance, where time would admit, it hardly appears that the beneficial effects it would produce can possibly be doubted. Yet suppose," adds this experienced and benevolent officer, "that desertion should sometimes, or even frequently occur, would there be more of it than under the system of confinement practised hitherto? And what becomes of the deserters? A very important question. They go to sea in merchant vessels, and are speedily impressed into the Navy again."*

All officers, indeed, who have tried the experiment fairly, must, I think, have found the benefit of the practice recommended, provided other circumstances on board were not so much out of joint as to render such indulgence impracticable. If, however, there were an order on the subject of granting leave, officers would then be more strongly urged to attend to many points of the internal discipline of their ships, which at present may often be too little heeded. In some of the strictest disciplined ships in the whole Navy during the last war, the leave was never stopped, and the sailors seldom took an improper advantage of it. In short, when they are properly trusted—that is,

* Observations on some Points of Seamanship; with Practical Hints on Naval Economy, p. 61. By Captain Anselm Griffiths, R. N. 1828.

when they are treated like men, and their honour reposed on, they very rarely betray that confidence.

"It is impossible, indeed," writes my able and experienced friend Captain Duncan, "to urge too strongly the point of granting leave to the fullest possible extent, for the most beneficial effects will be derived from it. Instead of officers being afraid to let their ships come into harbour to be refitted, lest the men should desert, they will find an additional reason for bringing their ships as near the shore as possible, in order to let the seamen enjoy the benefit of such proximity. Now that steam is so much used, there certainly ought no longer to be any detention of ships in harbour by contrary wind; and the saving of time and expense in refitting ships in harbour, instead of a distant roadstead, might obviously be immense, when the loss of time in rowing backwards and forwards in boats to the dock-yard is considered."

It may be remarked here, as something truly extraordinary, that, in the year 1833, there should still be established at Portsmouth no government steam-boat belonging to the harbour, and in constant communication with Spithead—say every hour, or every two hours. It will scarcely be credited, that there is not yet any regular steam-vessel at that greatest of our naval ports, for the purpose of towing ships of war to sea; so that, when such assistance becomes indispensable, as it did last summer, when the armament against Holland was fitted out, the common Ryde passage-boats were of necessity hired for the occasion! The consequence is, that the old and wasteful fashion of sending the ships' boats from Spithead to the dock-yard for stores, or to the flag-ship to answer signals, is still continued.

Were a steam-boat, of no very great power, to be permanently stationed in the harbour, not only for the purpose of towing ships out and in, but for towing off decked barges or lighters with stores from the dock-yard, victualling-office and gun-wharf, and also for making a certain number of trips daily to Spithead, at stated hours, the necessity for wearing and tearing the ship's boats and the people would be done away with. Besides which, all the services alluded to would be more quickly and more efficiently performed—not one boat in ten which now leaves a ship would need then be sent away, and the annual saving of expense to the country, even in peace time, would not fail to be very considerable. In war, this promptitude and certainty of communicating with Spithead in all weathers, and the saving of boats and the men's health and time, to say nothing of the facility of getting off provisions and stores, would be of the utmost consequence to the service. But such improvements should take their rise now, in peace, so as to be gradually matured by practice, and fitted, by experience, to act promptly and, with certainty on the occurrence of hostilities. In another point of view, there can be no doubt of the policy of this method of communicating with the harbour. For it is notorious, that by far the greatest number of desertions take place from boats sent on shore, and detained there either by business or by stress of weather. Anything, therefore, which should diminish the necessity of communicating by boats with the shore, is greatly to be desired.

It is one of the most puzzling problems in discipline to know how to punish a man who breaks his leave. I have given much of my attention to this point; and as I never made "stopping leave" a punishment, nor ever had occasion to repent of this rule, I feel that I may speak upon it with some confidence. If the punishment be severe, the danger is, that a man who, from accident, from transient recklessness, or from drunkenness, has overstaid his time an hour or two, may be driven into desertion by the fear of chastisement on his return to the ship. On the other hand, if there be no penalty, or only a very trivial one, attached to the breach of a promise made on going ashore, the slightest temptation is enough to keep some men from returning to their duty. Thus, in both cases, they are urged into error; and to steer between the two extremes is a nice affair for the officer.

I tried the following experiment with considerable success in a ship which I commanded for several years. The invention, however, is not mine, but is due, as far as I know, to a most excellent officer, now no more, of the name of Cowan, who was first lieutenant of the Leander when I was midshipman in her.

I have already mentioned that I made no exceptions—that is, I permitted every man and boy in the ship to have leave in his turn to go on shore, whatever might have been his conduct. I wished them all to feel, that whatever else they might have to complain of, the heart-breaking misery of a prison should not be superadded. I had, as usual, a "Liberty Book," as it is called, but I ruled it differently, adding sundry columns. When the people wished to go on shore, and it was settled how many could be spared, the names were written down in the first column, and it was distinctly explained to them that they were expected to return to their ship by a certain hour next day. This hour was then written in the second column against each man's name, and shown to him.

Next day, when the "liberty men" dropped on board, either in groups or one by one, the exact hour and minute of each person's return was written down in column No. 3; and then, in column 4, the number of hours and minutes which had elapsed between the hour promised and that on which each man actually returned. If the men were sober at the time of their return, or if not, on the day after, they were made to look at the book and remark the difference between the columns, showing the extent to which they had broken their leave. This stood as a balance against them, to be made use of in the manner I shall proceed to point out.

Suppose that the whole ship's company had been allowed to go on shore in turn, and that the ship then proceeded to another port. As soon as she was again at anchor and put to rights, it was announced as usual, that leave was to be given to go on shore. Aft marched a dozen men, cap in hand, to give their names in for this indulgence. Now came into play column No. 4 of the Liberty Book. If, upon inspecting the list, it appeared that none of the men applying had formerly broken their leave, that is, exceeded the stipulated period, their request was granted, and ashore they went. But it generally happened, especially at first, that there

stood against most of them a balance of some hours, and it then became a matter of direct and equitable adjustment to determine who had the best claim to consideration. A man who had come off to his leave was, I considered, clearly entitled to a preference before one whose debt amounted even to so short a period as half an hour; and so on throughout. To those persons against whose names stood the smallest amount of broken leave, the priority was always given. As the whole arrangement was put as strongly as possible on the footing of good faith and the point of honour, we succeeded, after a time, in making the men fully sensible, that punctuality is an important part of truth; and thus they came to feel and to understand the object and spirit of the regulation.

It would sometimes happen, that a man who had overstaid his time a day or two, would not get on shore again during the whole time the ship was next in harbour; but this was clearly his own fault, and was looked upon not so much as a punishment, strictly so called, as the sacrifice incident to the liquidation of a debt. For, in fact, he really had been quite as long a time on shore as the rest of the crew, only he had chosen to take his share of the indulgence all at once, and contrary to orders. Heedless fellows in this sort of scrape generally got well laughed at for their pains, by their companions. I have heard them compared to those greedy dogs who swallow their two days' allowance of provisions in the first twenty-four hours, and then growl that they have nothing to eat! It is always a capital result in discipline, when the officer can manage to enlist the general sympathy of his people in the execution of his own ordinances.

It is usual to let the men go on shore before noon, but I satisfied the sailors in the ship I commanded, that it would suit them better to take their dinner comfortably on board at twelve o'clock, and land at one, instead of rushing into a Spanish pulperia the moment they went on shore, to swill abominably sour wine on an empty stomach, or swallow red-hot pisco (a sort of ultra fiery whiskey), and to eat a miserable dinner of bacalao, garlic, and olive oil!

"Let me advise you to land at one o'clock," said I to the 'liberty men,' "mount your horses, take your gallop into the country, come back to the port, eat your supper, and then return on board; or, if you have a mind, take the best night's rest you can catch amongst the chinchas and pulgas (bugs and fleas) of the Almendral or the Quebradas. But, whatever you do, pray try to find your way off sober like men, and not beastly drunk like hogs."

At first these recommendations produced little or no effect; but, in the course of time, as the men had plenty of money, (in consequence of a measure which I shall explain by and by), and went constantly on shore, they came to see the reasonableness of dining in comfort on his Majesty's allowance in their own snug berths, and then landing, to walk or ride about at leisure and like rational beings, not like frantic savages let loose on the public. Many of the men returned to the ship by sunset, and eventually it became a very rare thing to see any entry in column No. 4 of the Liberty Book.

I have always thought it was one of the most mischievous effects of the infrequent and uncertain leave on shore given during the war, that the men fancied it a point of conscience to get as drunk as possible whenever they could. Whereas, when they are in the general practice, as at present in peace, of going on shore, they find it, on the whole, more agreeable to keep tolerably sober.

"As regards the seamen," remarks Captain Griffiths, who invariably allowed his men to go on shore during the whole war, "while leave, in the most extended shape the various services admit of, tends to promote contentment, happiness, and cheerful activity, it also elevates their character, reduces the horrid drunken scenes, with all their injurious consequences, which a very limited indulgence of twenty-four hours' liberty so often produced. It would become, when judiciously managed, a most powerful means of reducing corporal punishments, by substituting refusal of leave."

I agree cordially with all this, except, perhaps, the proposal of stopping leave as a punishment; for I conceive that the essence of the plan, when it is possible, consists in there being no circumstance whatever that shall interfere with leave to go on shore.

I do not say there was no desertion from the ship I commanded, or that the people were more happily situated than in other vessels; but the men who deserted seldom ran away from leave, and rather took some other opportunity of getting off. I may remark, by the way, for the information of persons who are not acquainted with the nature of a ship's duties, that it has been found next to impossible, by any system of precautions, effectually to prevent desertion from a ship in which the men are determined not to remain. It is often a source of bitter mortification to officers, to find that all their exertions to render the ship an agreeable residence to their men prove insufficient, and that the persons they had most confided in are sometimes the first to run away. Still, the best security against this roving disposition on the part of the men, under all circumstances—at least all that I have seen—is to trust them freely and frankly on shore.

I am well aware that the experiment which I have just described was tried under the most favourable circumstances. The ship I commanded (the Conway, of 28 guns) was a small one; the crew were all volunteers; it was peace time; and the climate was delightful; while the nature of our occupations, at least as far as the crew were concerned, partook a good deal of the pleasure of yachting. If we substitute war, impress, and hard fagging service in a cold climate, and in a line-of-battle ship, blockading, or employed in long cruises, the plan I found so efficacious in the absence of all these drawbacks, might not answer so well. I state this broadly, because I wish to exaggerate nothing; and I am fully sensible that very considerable modifications must often be made under the various severe trials to which our ships are so often exposed. Still, however, I am not the less satisfied that the principle of invariably giving the people leave to go on shore is a sound one, and is almost always practicable to a considerable extent.

"There is nothing," most truly, says the judicious Captain Griffiths, "which so powerfully operates to reconcile the mind of man to his lot as the largest portion of freedom his situation is capable of admitting. And if this position be correct, then will every unnecessary restraint act even more powerfully in the opposite scale. Men look to the indulgence of correct liberty, and therefore receive it as a thing of course, and its possession sets the mind at ease; while an irritating, an angry, and galling impatience attends every unnecessary infringement of it."

It has sometimes occurred to me, that it might have a good effect if men who broke their leave were made to forfeit a fraction of their pay nearly corresponding to the time thus stolen, as it might be called, from the service of the king and country —say a penny an hour, or a couple of shillings a day. But this suggestion cannot be adopted with effect till the seamen's wages are paid regularly and frequently, both at home and abroad, otherwise they would not be aware of the importance of stopping a day or two's pay. As soon as their money shall be frequently and regularly paid, the men will learn to appreciate the value of their reward. Many of them, I fully believe, will then come off to their leave, rather than lose half-a-crown, if deducted from their pay at the moment, who would not be deterred from deserting by the certainty of eventually losing fifty pounds on the present system. In both cases the temptation to remain on shore might be exactly the same; but in one instance the loss would be immediate and intelligible—in the other vague and remote.

I have said that the Conway's people in South America had always plenty of money; but this requires some explanation, for at that period (1821-2) the men were not allowed to receive even the smallest portion of their wages abroad. The republics in that quarter of the world had not then been recognised by England, and consequently we had no ministers, nor even consuls, at any of the ports along the vast extent of coast visited by British ships. One of the results of this singular state of things was the lawless condition of the crews on board many of our merchant vessels. At all times, the mercantile marine discipline is sufficiently loose; but in countries where no appeal could be made to authorities regularly constituted by our own government, either by the master against his insubordinate crew, or by the sailors against the oppression of their captain, the evils arising from such laxity were seriously felt by the trading interests. In the absence of consuls at Valparaiso, Lima, and elsewhere, the duties of that department fell into the hands of the captains of the ships of war, who did as well as they could, though, of course, from being but scantily informed as to the technicalities of the consulate office, they could not pretend to any great correctness in the use of the proper forms. Be this as it may, the merchants trading to those parts were often reduced to the greatest difficulties; sometimes by the refractory disposition of their crews; sometimes by their deserting in a body and leaving their ships at anchor unmanned; and sometimes by their getting into such scrapes with custom-house officers and other local authorities, that the purposes of their voyage were brought to a complete stand-still. Out of these various dilemmas, it became a novel duty for captains of men-of-war to extricate their countrymen.

It so happened, in short, that, in almost every port which we visited, we found English, American, and sometimes ships of other nations, in want of help. It frequently happened that the assistance required consisted of carpenters', joiners', caulkers', and shipwrights' work, or that our sail-maker or the armourer's experience was needed; but, generally speaking, we were applied to for seamen to refit the rigging, or for stout working hands to stow away or hoist out the cargo. As one of the chief objects of our ship's being placed in those seas was to assist the subjects of his Majesty wherever we met with them, the commander-in-chief, Sir Thomas Hardy, not only made no objection to this assistance being given to the merchants, when the king's immediate service allowed of our sparing men for that purpose; but he encouraged us to contribute as much as we could in the manner required to advance the interests of the country.

As the wages of labour in those new countries were very high, the owners, supercargoes, masters, and others who engaged the services of our seamen and artificers, were willing to pay the men well for their trouble; and, generally speaking, at a higher rate than was current in the market, in consideration of the greater degree of order and habits of attention which belonged to the parties we sent them. Even the ordinary remuneration, however, proved an ample source of profit to our people, and enabled them to live with ten times the comfort they could otherwise have enjoyed during the whole period of our station. In sending such working parties as we could spare, to assist these merchant ships, we took care to select from the crew those hands which could best be spared from his Majesty's service, and were most likely to do justice to the required tasks. But, as their absence necessarily entailed a heavier degree of work on those who remained behind, I thought it but fair to let it be fully understood, that all money derived from these extra jobs should be placed in a common fund, to be distributed, from time to time, equally to every man on board. This arrangement was readily and cheerfully entered into the moment I suggested and explained it. All jealousy or suspicion of favour being shown to one more than to another was thus completely prevented, while the first lieutenant was enabled at all times to pick out the men best suited for the services required.

Two incidental effects arose out of all this, which proved of considerable utility. The constant extra practice greatly improved our seamen and artificers in the manipulations of their business, while, at moments when they must otherwise have been quite idle, their minds were kept so fully employed, that I never saw men more contented than at those busy periods. There was also much animation on board, caused by this steady influx of cash into the ship's company's treasury.

It is a good thing, by the way, to have at all times a "strong-box" on board every ship. In this place of security, the people should be encouraged by every means to place their money. It will be sufficient that each man deposit his cash in a bag marked with his name, and that he be at

liberty to take what he pleases from it from time to time. No accounts need be kept, provided care be taken never to allow the box to be opened, except at a stated period, and under the eye of a commissioned officer. I understand, from good authority, that no plan is more effectual in preventing theft and gambling, than this of "Jack's strong-box."

I have already mentioned, that the whole crew were allowed in turn to go on shore on leave; and it was our invariable custom, as each man went over the side, to give him, for his day's fun, a dollar out of the public purse, and to mark it against his name in a book opened for the purpose by the clerk. With this sum, a sailor could land and take an hour or two's ride among the Cordilleras, return to the port, enjoy his segar, his supper, and his bed, and return next day to his duty, well pleased with his "lark," but not sorry to get back to the comforts of his cheerful home. At first, before they fell into the way of taking their dinner on board, and landing afterwards, and while there existed amongst them the brutal habit of getting drunk, as a matter of course, their dollar went but a short way. When, however, longer experience taught them better habits, the right use of money dawned upon them, and, as they never took their change without counting it, they learned to calculate beforehand what each item of their jollification was to cost.

By and by the men became desirous of adding to the comforts of their mess-places; and, with a portion of the money which, at their request, was served out to each man, they bought mirrors, crockery, pictures, and much better clothes than the purser supplied. In short, more or less of that improved taste and feeling of pride, in its way, crept into the ship, which is always observed amongst men-of-war seamen when prize-money is frequently received. I should even expect still better things to arise from the regular and frequent payment of the seamen's wages, than any which can spring from the uncertain and unequal distributions of prize-money, or from such precarious sources as that I have just been describing. If the men felt certain of receiving their due reward at fixed periods, they would naturally act upon this conviction, and a considerable portion of that absurd irregularity of habits, alike destructive of good order, good taste, and good morals, for which our seamen are at present so disreputably celebrated, might in time be exchanged for better tastes, and for manners less repugnant to everything we could wish to see in any class of the community.

One evening, about half-past eight or nine o'clock, while we were lying at Valparaiso, the owner of a light merchant brig at anchor near us, with her topmasts down, came on board, and mentioned, in confidence, that he had thoughts of engaging in a grand speculation, provided we would assist him with all our might and main.

"I propose," said the owner, "to equip, load, and despatch that dismantled brig, with a particular cargo, to Lima; but, in order to my reaching that market in time, I must get her rigged and off before several other vessels, which I suspect are looking the same way. Now, as this can be accomplished only by dint of the utmost exertion of all your skill and strength, I have come on board the Conway to see how far you will assist a speculation, in which many thousand pounds of British capital are to be embarked."

The first lieutenant said he should be most happy to assist in such an enterprise, and sent for the boatswain and carpenter, who were just stepping into bed. After a short consultation, in which the owner explained what was required in the rigging and shipwright's departments, it was agreed to commence working at once. The happy merchant relanded to complete the bargain he had left unsettled, till he should privately ascertain whether or not we were "conformable," as he called it. His friends on shore, who knew nothing of his nocturnal visit to the Conway, nor its objects, and had scarcely noticed his absence from the supper-table, readily closed with the terms he now offered for their goods. They stared at his boldness in making such a purchase, for as yet they saw no possible means of his getting the things off his hands.

In the mean time, the boatswain had roused out of bed as strong a party of his best sailors as could work at the brig's rigging; the carpenter, with his mates and caulkers, brought up their tool-boxes to the gangway; while the armourer lighted the forge, and the sailmaker fitted the palm and needle to his hands—all ready for a hard night's job. The owner of the brig speedily returned, bringing with him the master and the mate, and in less than half-an-hour the little vessel was boarded, and clustered over with half a hundred of our fellows, who were so delighted in the ploy, that they worked, laughed, and chatted, under the bright moon of a Chilian midsummer's night, as merrily as if they had been equipping their own barky to chase a galleon. At sunrise, this party were relieved by a fresh set of hands from the ship, while numerous shore-boats were hired, first to bring off the ballast, then to ship the cargo —all of which was hoisted in by a working party of our marines, and stowed away below by the holders and other men from the Conway most accustomed to that kind of work. The caulkers and carpenters laboured hard at the decks and sides, careless of all interruptions. The topmasts and top-gallant masts soon perched themselves aloft, and in due season the sails were brought to the yards. To an inexperienced eye, the whole might have presented a scene of confusion; but, to those who were in the secret, it showed nothing but a well-ordered certainty of purpose, which delighted the owner of the brig, as he saw the spars gradually rise above one another, and the vessel settle more and more in the water, under the weight of the rich cargo with which she was freighted.

About the middle of the day the master landed, in order to cast about for a crew; and, having looked into half-a-dozen pulperias or wine-shops, he readily engaged the required number of sailors. These he presently reduced to a state of complete intoxication; and, as fast as they sunk under the genial influence of Bacchus, he had them carried off to the brig, where they were laid in their berths, as unconscious as the bags of wheat and flour which formed the principal part of the cargo destined for the famished city of Lima, then blockaded by Lord Cochrane.

Towards sunset, the whole equipment and stowage of the brig being completed, all our working

parties—by this time pretty well fagged—were withdrawn, except the boatswain and one boat's crew. These hands, at the master's request, then proceeded to weigh the brig's anchor, and having reefed the topsails, hoisted and trimmed them for standing to the northward, right before the wind, all night.

At last, when the harbour was nearly cleared, the boatswain, heartily wishing the captain a very good voyage, put the tiller into his hands; and, leaving him and the mate (apparently the only two living souls on board), returned to the Conway to receive the grateful acknowledgments of the enraptured owner, who brought with him a huge bag of dollars, to add to the strong-box of our crew, in reward for their well-timed exertions, which, he assured us, would put several thousand good pounds in his pocket.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE MOON AND THE LONGITUDE.

After a ship is commissioned, rigged, stored, manned, and armed, and is ordered to sea, it becomes necessary to consider how she is to be carried in safety over the boundless ocean.

Well may our glorious satellite, the Moon, be called the sailor's friend! She not only lights up the night for us, and cheers us on our progress, but guides our steps in security over trackless seas, which, but for her aid, must be traversed with doubt and difficulty. Yet no one, I suspect, can fully understand these advantages who has not been repeatedly made to feel the contrast between navigating with and without such companionship. When a ship is near the shore, especially if the coast be unknown, the difference between a moonlight evening and a dark one is immense. If the moon be up, her benignant influence extends to every part of the ship, and every member of her crew. The frenzy and confusion she is supposed to impart to her votaries, is all a libel, for she is the mistress of order and sobriety. Aided by her, the navigator acts with the vigour and confidence which become his station, steers in for the shore—be it steep or shallow—scruples not to enter his port, or to wind his way among rocks and shoals, till at last he drops his anchor in his proper berth without the loss of an hour, instead of dilly-dallying till daybreak. As the ship sweeps gaily along the land, lighted up, as it were, for the occasion, the officers look about them, remark the coasts, take notice of the soundings and the courses steered; and even the drowsiest among the middies are excited to something like a generous enthusiasm, by the vivid interest of a fine moonlight scene, in a country unvisited before.

In a dark night, near a dangerous coast, with a baffling wind, occasional fogs, a drizzling rain, an uncertain tide, and perplexing soundings, different from those of the chart, the whole aspect of affairs is changed. The commander feels harassed and distracted, and often, with the most active zeal, and the best information possible, is left totally at a loss which way to act. The officers under him, who share little of his heavy responsibility, become stupefied by the obscurity, and cease to make any great exertion—knowing or fancying it to be useless. The sailors, fagged, drenched, and confused by the uncertainty of purpose in the higher councils, drop into various out-of-the-way corners, or stow-holes, and are with difficulty brought to act together at the moment of need, in the midst of the rain, cold, and darkness.

But when the merry Moon is shining bright, Jack is always alive. Instead of skulking under the bows of the boats, on the booms, to escape the pattering of the tiresome sleet, or cowering to leeward of the masts silent and comfortless, he joins his companions in the middle of the deck, on the spot where the light shines freest from the shadows of the sails and ropes. There he tells old tales of deeds done in former years—or carols, light of heart, to the stars and planets sparkling above him. Fatigued though his limbs may be, his mind is fresh and ready for service; and at the first sound of his officer's voice, or the preparatory notes of the boatswain's call, before its shrill tones are heard, he leaps to his post, conscious that his activity is noted, and feeling assured that his exertions are not wasted, he works, as it is called, with a will. Even the sails appear animated on such occasions, and hold a better wind. The yards are trimmed sharper and more in unison with one another; the topsail-sheets come closer home, and the bowlines are better hauled. Every rope is drawn to its proper degree of tightness, and the ship, grateful for the assistance, sails all the better. The heavy dew which, in such a serene night, settles upon the canvas, closes up the pores, and thus, by catching every puff of wind, enables the seamen to profit by airs so faint, that in dark nights their existence would not be known, and their service lost.

This accidental use of the word serene reminds me that the Spanish for dew is "serena," and thence, no doubt, their romantic Serenade. To those, indeed, who have often watched the silent settling of the dew on the cordage and sails, during such nights as I am now describing, I need not recall the poetical images which the season brings to mind. For my own part, I can then almost fancy I hear the tinkle of the sweet guitar, or see the inviting glitter of a dark black eye at the tempting lattice, as my thoughts are carried back to the luxurious shores of Chili or Peru; or, earlier still, when life and love were young, to the gay scenes of Vigo and Corunna!

If, however, the sky is overcast, the Moon below the horizon, and the chill wind, drifting past, sighs mournfully amongst the dripping shrouds, not one sail fore or aft is properly trimmed, and the poor ship bags sadly to leeward. If a squall comes, the ropes get foul; the yards stick aloft; the sails are split; the men appear torpid and paralysed; away goes a mast; the shore and surf make their appearance; the helm is put down, but she refuses to come about; the anchor is cut away, the cable is jammed in the tier; the keel takes the ground, and all is lost!

Or, even supposing none of these fatal and extreme disasters to arise, the mischief and inconvenience, loss of time, loss of way, and, alas! too often, loss of temper, are evils essentially incident to the absence of our soothing and pretty friend, the Moon. If an accident happens to a sail or spar when the night is pitch-dark, twice as long a

time is required to repair it as when she is up. In the mean time the helmsman let him be ever so skilful or attentive, must yaw the ship about, for he can see nothing a-head to act as a normal; and the compass, in spite of the steadying touch of the quarter-master, will often spin half round the box; thus, much way is lost. The leadsman in the chains, with the snow drifting in his face, and his hands cold and benumbed, can with great difficulty tell the marks on the line,—or his lead gets foul of the foresheet, or is cast over the flook of the spare anchor. In short, everything goes wrong; or, to express the matter correctly, a vast deal more trouble is necessary to keep things in tolerable order, when it is dark than when it is light.

When the Moon is near the full, and high in the heavens, the helmsman feels his power doubled. Instead of twisting about the wheel, a turn at a time, and wearing out his strength and spirits in vain attempts to keep the ship's head steady by means of a needle which vibrates a point or two each way, he stands with one hand on the side-spoke, and his eye fixed on the weather-leech of the foretop-sail, which he has brought just to touch the bright star Canopus, or Capella, or, it may be, the great planet Jupiter, or even the glorious Moon herself. Whichever it be that he fixes on, he can instantly discover, by its change of relative position, that the ship's head begins to deviate from the straight course. Then, by giving the slightest touch to the helm—often by merely a gentle additional pressure, without giving any perceptible motion to the wheel, he counteracts the tendency of the ship to err in her course.

By no strained or unmeaning analogy it may be said, that errors in the course of discipline are similarly corrected on such occasions; for the officer commanding the deck can readily perceive the first deviations from the line of duty, and by letting it be felt that he discovers the incipient offence, or rather the tendency that way, he may generally prevent it altogether. If a squall should threaten to come upon the ship in a bright evening, the sail is taken promptly off the ship, and as promptly reset when the breeze is past. The ropes are coiled up in readiness, and each man is at his station, to give effect to the word of command the moment it is uttered. The leadsman sings out joyously and confidently the soundings—true to a foot—instead of fiddling with his fingers for the mark, and making an allowance for the height at which he stands.

The occasion upon which, during all my professional life, I have felt most grateful to the Moon, was when I first visited the mighty River Plate, of which the entrance is more than a hundred miles wide, and filled with numerous shoals and dangerous passages. We kept close to the right hand, or northern shore, all the day, and at sunset passed the port of Maldonado. I had orders to communicate with any of His Majesty's ships which might happen to be lying there, and therefore stood close in; but on perceiving only two French men-of-war, one bearing an admiral's flag, I resolved to stand on for Monte Video, which lies in a direction nearly west. The wind, which was moderate, blew from the east, the Moon was at the full, we possessed excellent charts, and the late Captain Foster, then mate of the Conway, knew, from personal survey, every inch of the way. So on we glided as steadily as if we had been navigating some glassy inland lake, for there was not even a ripple on the surface, and the mighty Rio de la Plata does not begin to assume the appearance of a river for more than a hundred miles further up. In short, nothing could be more beautiful than this run of sixty miles, for we kept the land in sight almost the whole of the way. As fast as we lost sight of one headland, or island, we looked out for some other which we knew to lie nearly in our path.

A better proof can hardly be afforded of the perfection to which the science of hydrography, or nautical surveying is brought, than the fact, that even merchant vessels can now run amongst the shoals, and in the shallow water of the River Plate, not only without apprehension, but with almost as much confidence as if the unseen submarine ridges of sand amongst which they thread their way, were raised above the surface.

About midnight we passed the islands of Flores, between which and Monte Video we had reason to believe we should find the commodore's ship at anchor. Accordingly, without altering our course a single point, we hit upon the exact spot, and presently saw the tall masts of the Superb glistening in the moonlight right a-head. We dropped anchor close alongside; and on my going on board to report the ship's arrival, I received orders instantly to proceed to Buenos Ayres. Though it was still night, the pilot whom we received from the ship made no difficulties, saying, as he glanced his eye to the Moon, and measured her altitude, "With such a light as that we shall get on as well as if it were day."

Although it is, undoubtedly, in the fine-weather regions of the globe that the picturesque or poetical beauties of the Moon are most felt and seen, her highest utility to seamen lies in the tempestuous latitudes beyond the tropics. Many a stout-souled mariner's heart beats with anxiety and apprehension as he steers his bark round the stormy capes which bound Africa and America, or, worse still, into the British Channel, before a hard south-wester, and prays for the Moon to rise. Even to this hour, though many years have passed over my head since then, I remember the joyous feeling with which I blessed the coming of her pale light, when my poor ship was entangled with icebergs off Cape Horn, in the long and dreary nights of the Antarctic July. Smugglers, like the borderers of England and Scotland, alternately profit by the Moon's light and by her absence—calculating their secret purpose for the dark period—that which is open for the evenings which are bright. "Reparabit cornua Phœbe,"—wait till the moon refills her horns—is a motto well known on Tweedside! In like manner, squadrons blockading and blockaded court the aid of the changing Moon, and shape their proceedings accordingly. When she rises, and the in-shore frigate, after many an hour of anxiety, by counting the enemy's fleet, can ascertain that none have escaped, the relief to the officer on the watch is unspeakable. But what must be the stealthy delight of a well-freighted enemy's ship that has passed the blockading squadron, and discovers, when the Moon gets up, that her powerful antagonists are no longer to be seen!

The ever-varying nature of her light, the irregular periods at which she rises and sets, the power which clouds of a certain degree of thickness possess of extinguishing her lustre altogether, produce an endless diversity, which defies all calculation, and often renders those who depend upon her the most wretched of mortals. No gay flirt ever jilted men more wantonly than whole crews are often cheated and laughed at by the coquettish Moon; and yet, like the bewitching Cynthias of the minute, she never fails to win all hearts back to her worship the instant she chooses to smile upon them again!

In singing the praises of the Moon, I need not dwell on the mysterious but irresistible connexion existing between her chaste ladyship and the waters which cover the face of the earth—a tangible evidence of the action of gravitation, of which no familiarity with the phenomenon ever lessens the interest. Even on coasts where the rise and fall of the tides is but trifling, circumstances occur to mark the empire of the Moon over the waves in characters not to be mistaken. On the south coast of Peru, I remember well, that although the perpendicular elevation and depression of the sea was small at any period of the month, yet at the seasons of full and change, the surf lining the shore became more than doubly formidable and difficult of passage, while the waves which dashed against the cliffs rose to many times their common altitude. I am really afraid to state how high I have seen these masses of water travel up the face of the rocks at Mollendo, and, curling backwards, tumble again into the sea with a roar so loud, that it made all on board quake, though we were anchored at more than a mile off, with stout iron cables. I speak of regions where no storms are known, and where, except at its margin, the ocean, as its name imports, is truly Pacific. Even at a short distance from the land, little if any augmentation of the long regular swell is perceptible at the period of full and change. But the increased movement caused by the joint action of the moon and sun at those epochs, materially, though insensibly to our observation, augments the great tide waves, or oscillations, in the deep sea; and when these are interrupted in their gigantic play by the shelving ashore, however steep, the result is a most enormous increase of breakers on the coast causing the interruption.

That which affords merely an object of curiosity, or, at most, a topic of philosophical speculation to indifferent observers, may become of great practical importance to an officer whose mind is open to every opportunity of turning the resources of nature to his purpose. This fact of the high surf on the coast of Peru, was known to every one in those countries, but it required the master-mind of Lord Cochrane—now Rear-Admiral Lord Dundonald—to seize upon the advantages which it furnished to his daring enterprises. When a landing was to be effected, or troops to be embarked, his lordship always contrived to drop, as if by magic, on the fittest spot, at the very quartering of the Moon; but when it became his policy to avoid communication between him and the shore, he took care to fix the period of his operations at the change or full—seasons when the surf always ran so high, that not even the balsas of the country could pass it.

The professional instances might be indefinitely multiplied, in which the indirect influence of the Moon, or the direct benefit of her light, modifies the operations of seamanship in all climates. But it is only between the tropics that the full splendour of her surpassing beauty is acknowledged. No poet, unless it were Moore, nor painter, unless Turner should be tempted to visit those seas, could do justice to the exquisite scenery of the Straits of Sunda, or Sincapore, or Malacca. To sail about in those regions in a bright moonlight evening forms truly the beau idéal of navigation; and so little can I bear the thoughts of never enjoying it again, that if any excellent old lady, or good-natured and worthy old gentleman, were to leave me a fortune, I should be half tempted to buy me a ship of my own, and sail back to the East, to banquet as I was wont in those delicious countries! Often, indeed, have I wondered how it happens that the spirited and wealthy members of our Yacht Club content themselves with such tiny, minnow-like voyages as they make, instead of seeking in distant climes for scenes of which one night is worth a whole year of their present jog-trot routine.

But the genuine triumph of the Moon, after all, consists in her power, when duly propitiated, of conducting her votaries round the world, and leading them into unknown seas and bays, and far from land, with as much certainty as if they were sailing close to their own shores, familiar to their eyes from infancy. A very few words will render her paramount utility in this respect obvious, and make the mighty mystery of nautical astronomy intelligible in some degree to every one who has considered the subject even in the most superficial manner.

As the earth wheels round on its axis once in every day, each spot will, in succession, bring the sun upon its meridian, or plane passing through the zenith of the place and both the poles of the world. The moment when the sun's centre reaches this plane is called noon; and as there are three hundred and sixty degrees in the whole circuit of the globe, and we choose to divide the period of time into twenty-four hours, there must pass, every hour, exactly fifteen of these degrees; or, in other words, a place which lies so far to the westward of us as to require an hour's interval to bring its meridian to the sun, after our own meridian has passed it, is said to lie in longitude 15° west of us; and it will be one o'clock with us when it is noon at that spot. In like manner, a place situated so far to the eastward as to get the sun on its meridian an hour before ours reaches it, is said to lie in 15° of east longitude; and it will be one o'clock there when it is noon with us. And so for all intervals of a greater or smaller magnitude. Thus, if we possess the means of discovering, at any particular spot, and at any given instant, the exact hour of the day; and if we also possess the means of determining the hour of the day, at the same moment, on the meridian of any other spot, we obtain the difference of time between the two places. That is to say, we learn how long it takes for the sun to pass from the meridian of one of these places to that of the other. If this difference of time be then reduced into longitude at the rate of 15° to an hour, we ascertain the difference of longitude or distance east and west, between the

two places. This is the grand problem of the longitude, the attempt to discover which has turned so many heads.

The whole difficulty, therefore, resolves itself into these two points:—First, to determine the "Time at ship," or exact hour of the day, counting from noon when we are observing; and, secondly, to discover the "Time," or hour of the day, at some other meridian (say that of Greenwich), at the same instant. The one subtracted from the other gives the difference of time between the two meridians; and thence, by remembering that 15 degrees of the earth wheel round in one hour, we obtain the difference of longitude between the two places.

There are various methods in use for working out this question, but I shall mention only two, which have infinitely higher claims to notice than all the rest put together, at least in the practice of navigation.

One of these is called the method of Lunar Distances; the other the method of Chronometers. That by chronometers is extremely simple. It consists in regulating a watch, constructed upon particular principles, side by side with a clock at Greenwich, so that the two may keep going correctly together; that is, always showing the same hour at the same moment. If this watch, or chronometer, be good of its kind, it will continue to show the same time as the Greenwich clock, under any change of temperature, and in every place to which it may be carried, whether the distance be a few yards, or include the whole circuit of the earth.

I need scarcely pause to remark, that, in practice, it is a matter of indifference whether the chronometer so carried about from place to place really shows Greenwich time, or whether its daily rate of going, and consequently its accumulated error, be known at any stated moment. All that is required of the chronometer is, that it should afford the means (with or without correction) of ascertaining what is the true time at Greenwich at any given moment.

Supposing our chronometer to possess this property, we have then only to find out, by means of a very simple observation, the true time at the ship at any given instant (that is to say, the sun's distance from the meridian), and carefully to note the exact hour and minute shown by the chronometer, or, which is the same thing, by its old companion the clock at Greenwich at that moment. The difference between the ship's Time, so found on the spot by actual observation, and the Greenwich Time, shown by the chronometer, (when reduced to degrees at the rate of 15° to an hour,) is the longitude required.

The method of lunar observations is, in principle, identically the same. The only difference between them consists in the manner of arriving at the results. Dr. Wollaston, in a letter to me, dated 23d April, 1826, says, "The Moon is the hand of a great Greenwich clock, seen all over the world, with which you compare the chronometer, to see how it differs and how it goes. You then compare it with the sun as clock of the place. Having by another separate observation determined the latitude."

In practice it is easy to press the Moon into our service, and make her act as the hand of a Greenwich clock in the sky. The Moon, as every one knows, moves, like all the planets and satellites, from west to east, amongst the stars, and performs the complete circuit of the heavens once in every month; that is to say, she moves to the eastward through the heavens at the average rate of about 13 degrees a day, or somewhat more than half a degree an hour. Thus her apparent motion amongst the stars is about one minute of space in two minutes of Time; and this, which is a rate of movement distinctly perceptible even to the naked eye under some circumstances, is always observable with the instruments in use at sea. The consequence is, that whenever the sky is clear, and the Moon up, we can ascertain, at any given moment of time, by actual observation, her exact place in the heavens relatively to the sun or planets, or stars lying in her path. We then refer to the Nautical Almanac, an ephemeris in which the Moon's place has been previously computed by astronomers, and there we discover the Greenwich Time at which it has been predicted that she will reach the point in the heavens we have observed her to occupy at the moment of "taking the lunar," as it is called. Having likewise ascertained what was the "ship's Time" at the same instant, by other observations made on board, we ascertain their difference by subtracting one from the other, (precisely as in the case of the chronometer) and we arrive at the difference of longitude between the ship and Greenwich.

Dr. Wollaston's remark, that the Moon is the hand of a great Greenwich clock in the sky, will now, I think, readily be understood. All that we require of our chronometers, indeed, or of the Moon, is to tell us the Time, or hour of the day, at Greenwich, while, by means of other instruments, we determine the Time, or hour of the day at the ship at the very same moment. These two Times being known, the ship's place on the globe at that moment, so far as longitude is concerned, becomes known likewise, by simply taking their difference and converting it into longitude, at the rate of 15° to each hour.

To make this matter perfectly clear, one more illustration will suffice. Let it be supposed that the clock at Greenwich were to strike so loud as to be heard over the whole globe at the same moment, (and suppose the allowance for the slow rate of sound out of the question,) then any navigator, who had the means of ascertaining by observation the Time at his ship, at any given moment, would be able to ascertain his longitude, by comparing the Time so found with that derived from hearing the Greenwich clock strike the hour. Now the Moon answers—and answers admirably—the same purpose to the eye as the sound of the clock would to the ear; both give the time of the day at Greenwich, which is all we require to have given us, either by chronometer or by the Moon. The rest we can find by observation for ourselves.

The Latitude of the ship, or her distance north or south of the equator, is determined by a much simpler and totally independent process. It will easily be understood, that if there had happened to be a brilliant star fixed in the pole of the heavens, or that point to which the axis of the earth points, this star would have been seen by Captain Parry directly over his head had he reached the pole of the earth; and, for similar reasons, the same star would be seen in the

horizon by any one when crossing the equator. There happens not to be any star exactly in either pole; but that does not essentially matter, since, if we know what is called the Polar distance, that is, how far any star is distant from that point, we can easily make allowances to our observed altitudes, and come at the truth with as much precision, and almost as much facility, as if a blazing star really were permanently lighted up for us in the very pole itself. In practice, we have merely to watch till the sun, moon, planets, or some one of the numerous bright objects whose places in the heavens have been well ascertained, comes to the meridian of the ship; we then measure, by a sextant, its altitude or angular elevation above the horizon, and having applied to that angle the correction due to the star's known distance from the pole, we come at the latitude required. I need not repeat that, were the star which we observe situated actually in the pole, no such correction would be necessary. This may be repeated with other stars throughout the night, though many navigators content themselves with observing the sun's altitude at noon for the latitude. I used always to make my middies determine the ship's latitude in their respective night-watches, and write the result on the logboard, as a current matter of duty.

The exact moment of noon, it may be thought, is the only one at which the sun's altitude ought to be taken for determining the latitude; and so in strictness it is. But the change of altitude during about half an hour before, or half an hour after noon, is so small, and its rate of variation so well known, that if the ship's Time, which is generally known near enough, be only carefully noted by watch, while repeated observations of the sun's altitude are taken during the twenty minutes before and after noon, the latitude may be determined with nearly as much precision as if the exact meridian observation had been obtained.

Of course, navigators of any practical experience will smile at the A, B, C nature of some of these explanations; but my wish is to be useful to persons who have not had much experience. I have so many times seen the latitude lost because the meridian observation was not obtained, at moments, too, when it was of some consequence to ascertain the ship's place, and when it might easily have been obtained, that I venture to recommend all my brother-officers to attend to this point. Instead of summoning a crowd of idle gaping fellows on the gangway "to take the sun at noon," let each of them observe several altitudes of the sun first before and then after noon, and let him reduce these to the meridian by the methods they have all been taught, but seldom practise. Do not allow the master to tell them the true latitude, which we shall suppose he will ascertain by the meridian observation; but let us see how nearly the young fellows, without going below, will separately bring out their results. The master himself ought, in like manner, to commence taking altitudes and noting the time at least five-and-twenty minutes before noon; none of which need be worked out if he succeeds in observing the sun at its greatest altitude, or when it just passes the meridian. If, however, he loses that transient observation, he ought to continue making others for nearly half an hour after noon, carefully noting the time at each. The same rule applies with even greater simplicity of computation to the stars; and accordingly I can safely say, that I have seldom remained at sea twenty-four consecutive hours, in any climate, without obtaining the latitude, if I wished anxiously to know the ship's place.

It is very curious, but very true, that the extreme simplicity of the methods of ascertaining the latitude at sea, both at night and in the daytime, compared with the operose and delicate operations necessary for finding the longitude, give to the longitude an importance which it is by no means entitled to claim relatively to the latitude. One is exactly as material as the other; with this great difference in practice, that if the sky be clear, the latitude may easily be determined half-a-dozen times during every hour of the night, whereas the longitude by lunars can be gained only when the moon is above the horizon, and when she is at a particular age. By the help of a chronometer, indeed, the longitude may be corrected almost as often as the latitude; and navigators are much too remiss in using stars for the purpose of determining their Time at ship. If advantage be taken of the half hour, or three quarters of an hour after the sun is well below the horizon, or before he rises again in the morning, the altitude of stars may be observed with great precision by using the inverting telescope of the sextant: and if during the same period the meridian altitude of two or three stars be observed, the ship's place, both in latitude and longitude, may be settled very accurately.

I venture again to recommend my brother-officers in command to make their young gentlemen observe the latitude regularly at these periods, and also to acquire the habit of taking sights for the chronometer with the stars. Some of them will, no doubt, growl exceedingly (in their berths) at me for having suggested anything of this kind, but the time may come when they may not be sorry to have been thoroughly drilled, by actual practice, in operations upon which the safety of their ships may essentially depend, or the quickness and efficiency of their voyage be determined. It is surely needless to point out the importance, as far as security is concerned, of knowing correctly our place on the surface of the ocean, or to dwell upon the vast consequence of which that knowledge may prove to the public service. I remember one occasion in particular when a knowledge of the latitude was very useful to me when in command of a ship.

We were running for the British Channel before a hard south-west gale, and it was of considerable importance that we should reach some port in England without delay, for we were not only charged with despatches, but were very short of provisions and water. The only chronometer I had on board happened not to be very good, and the sky had been so completely overcast for more than a week before, that we could take no lunars. Thus I felt uncertain of my longitude, to the extent of a degree at least; and all who have tried the experiment know what a nervous thing it is to run in for the land, in the dark, and in stormy weather, when the ship's place is not correctly known. But I felt exceedingly loath to

lose so magnificent a wind, before which we spun along at the rate of ten knots, under a reefed foresail and close-reefed maintopsail. As long as daylight lasted I felt very confident and bold about the matter; but as the night closed in, the doubts and difficulties of the Channel navigation crowded round my thoughts, and almost determined me to bring the ship to, and wait for the dawn. After poring for a long while over the chart, however, I satisfied myself that if, by any means, I could be sure of keeping in the latitude of 49¾°, or within ten or a dozen miles on either side of that parallel, I should have clear ground to run over for three degrees of longitude at least, greatly within which I felt sure that the error of my chronometer must lie. But how was I to determine this point with any degree of certainty in such weather? The sky had not showed a patch of blue as large as my hand for several days, and though the sun had been seen through the clouds occasionally, we had not succeeded in catching a meridian observation.

In this dilemma I bethought me of the pole-star, proverbially the mariner's friend, and having fixed my sextant by the cabin light at the angle about which I knew the latitude must give the altitude of the pole, I cast my boat-cloak over my shoulder, and went on deck. There I stationed myself on the larboard side of the quarter-deck, with the instrument sheltered from the rain and spray under the cloak; and grasped in my right hand, while I kept my eye fixed on that part of the heavens in which I hoped, at some momentary opening, to detect the bright star of my night's fortunes. I had to wait more than an hour before there occurred anything like a chance, by which time my limbs had become cramped and stiffened by the constraint of one posture, while my eye ached and throbbed with its vain attempts to pierce the thick courses of clouds sweeping past.

At last I did get sight of the star, for three or four seconds, and though it glimmered so faintly through the mist that it could hardly have been identified as Polaris even by Sir James South himself, I knew by its altitude that it must be the object I was watching for.... The horizon was but a shabby one, indistinctly seen in the dark, and hacked by the topping waves like the Sierra Morena. Nevertheless, I succeeded in bringing the star in contact with the edge of the sea in the north, where, fortunately, there chanced at that moment to occur a faint gleam in the lower atmosphere.

I ran below, read off the angle, computed the latitude, and found it not more than twenty miles from what I had expected, and quite enough to keep the ship safe for some hours' run. But as one insulated observation, made under such circumstances, could not be depended upon, I hastened on deck again, and presently—that is in less than half-an-hour—caught a second glimpse of my friendly light-house in the sky. The result agreed with that of the first observation within ten miles, and of course gave me greater confidence.

Still, as the night was dark, the horizon bad, and the observations both to the north, I could not rely upon them to the extent which was desirable, I may say indispensable, in running for the Channel in such a night and at such a rate. So I cast about to fish for a star on the southern side of the zenith, and was rejoiced to find that a brilliant planet, either Jupiter or Saturn, I forget which, came to the meridian before midnight. On deck I went again, sextant in hand, and although I possessed no very certain means of telling "the Time at ship," I watched for the planet, and caught it for a moment not very far from the meridian, as I knew by the "compass bearing." With a flushed cheek, and hand trembling so that I could scarcely hold the pencil, I worked out the latitude, and found it to differ from the mean of the two results by the pole-star rather less than twenty miles. A second cast at the planet, after it had passed the meridian a few minutes, gave, when properly reduced, a latitude which differed only five or six miles from the first. Putting all these observations together, I felt quite certain that the ship's path lay within the limits marked along the chart as a safe track, and having given orders to shake out a reef, pressed forward as fast as masts, yards, and hull would bear.

The ever-welcome dawn at length appeared, and not long afterwards I had the infinite satisfaction of discovering from the deck the well-known Lizard Point, with its two light-houses, streaming with the night's rain, one above the other, and shining brightly in the morning sun.

CHAPTER XXVII.

SIR WALTER SCOTT'S EMBARKATION AT PORTSMOUTH IN THE AUTUMN OF 1831.

Of all the voyages and travels I ever made in my life, the most interesting by far was a trip to Portsmouth, when I had the honour of attending Sir Walter Scott, to assist him in his embarkation for Italy.

The extraordinary interest which the public feel in everything relating to this wonderful man induces me to believe that a simple narrative of the mere facts connected with his embarkation may to many prove acceptable. In due season, it is to be hoped his accomplished son-in-law will favour the world with a complete life of Sir Walter Scott; and as it is impossible to suppose that any person can have enjoyed such ample means of studying his character, and making himself acquainted with his unedited writings, as Mr. Lockhart, we may reasonably expect a work of the highest description of literary and philosophical interest, from opportunities so favourable in the hands of a writer of taste, genius, and cultivated talents*.

In the summer of 1831, it became but too well known to the public that Sir Walter Scott had suffered greatly from more than one severe attack of illness; and towards the autumn of that year it was generally understood that his medical attendants in the north strongly recommended his going abroad. There occurred much difficulty, however, in arranging this matter. In the first place, Sir Walter himself, it appears, felt extremely unwilling to move from home. Perhaps he knew, quite as well as his doctors, that he had not long to live; and it is certain that he experienced a strong wish not to breathe his last away from his beloved

* P.S.—1840.—I feel unwilling to vary the terms of a prediction which has been fulfilled to the letter.

Abbotsford — which, like one of his romantic novels, might be called the creation of his own hands! In the next place, the state of his bodily health rendered a long journey by land inexpedient, especially over the rough roads of France and Italy; and still further to add to the difficulty, great doubts arose if any of the ordinary sea conveyances would be likely to prove more suitable. The most favourable resource, and one which seemed obvious to every person but the Great Unknown himself, was a passage in a ship of war; but as he felt the strongest reluctance to making any application for such a favour, his friends in Scotland were reduced to an exceedingly awkward dilemma. The physicians, however, continued positively to declare, that Sir Walter must, by some means or other, be removed from Abbotsford, if he were to have the smallest chance of recovery. So long as he remained at home, it was clear to them, and to every one else, that his incessant literary exertions were only augmenting the alarming disease under which he was suffering.

At last, one of his most intimate friends, Mr. Robert Cadell, the publisher of his works, wrote to consult me confidentially on the occasion, entreating me to discover in what way a passage in a ship of war going to the Mediterranean might be obtained. Owing to some accident, it was late in the day before this letter was delivered to me; but, although it was long past office hours, I thought it would be wrong to stand upon etiquettes when the health of such a man was at stake. As the shortest way, therefore, of settling this pressing matter, I walked straight to the Admiralty, where I was told that the first lord, Sir James Graham, had gone to his room to dress for dinner, and could not be seen. Nevertheless, I took the liberty of writing him a short note, stating that I had just received a communication from a friend of Sir Walter Scott's, the contents of which I felt extremely desirous of communicating to him without delay, from a belief that his assistance on this occasion might essentially contribute to preserve one of the most valuable lives in the country.

As I anticipated, Sir James received me instantly; and, even before I had time to read half through the letter from Scotland, he assured me, that whatever was considered likely to promote Sir Walter Scott's recovery, should undoubtedly be granted by Government. On my stating the afflicting details of the case, he mentioned that, as a ship was shortly to sail for Malta, a passage in her might be considered certain.

"How the details are to be arranged," added Sir James, "is of no great consequence. Leave all that to me. I am personally well acquainted with Captain Pigot of the Barham, which is the frigate going to the Mediterranean, and therefore, at all events, I can manage it as a private favour, should any unexpected official difficulties occur. In the meantime, as it seems to be important, that Sir Walter should have as much leisure to prepare as possible, and, as the ship is actually under sailing orders, I beg you will write to him at once; and pray make an effort to save to-night's post. Say to Sir Walter, that his passage shall be arranged in the manner most agreeable to his wishes, and that he may set out on his journey south as soon as he can make it convenient to do so, certain that all things shall be got in readiness for him."

I wrote a letter to Sir Walter accordingly, which, by help of a swift cab, I succeeded in getting into the General Post-office at half-past seven. This was on the 13th of September.

Next day, it appears to have occurred to Sir James Graham, that although Captain Pigot, or any other officer in the Navy, would, of course, have been delighted to give Sir Walter Scott a passage in his ship, it might not be altogether agreeable to Sir Walter himself to lie under such extensive personal obligations to a perfect stranger. At least, I infer, from the following note to me, that such were Sir James Graham's reflections.

"(Private.) Admiralty, Sept. 15, 1821.

"DEAR SIR,

"I have received the commands of his Majesty, to order a free passage in the Barham to Malta for Sir Walter Scott and his daughter; and I have had the greatest pleasure in communicating to Sir Walter himself, the gracious terms in which his Majesty was pleased to convey his consent on this occasion.

"I have been sincerely glad of an opportunity of evincing my respect for Sir Walter on this occasion; and I thank you for giving me the information which has enabled me to prove the sincerity of these feelings. Very faithfully yours,

(Signed) "J. R. G. GRAHAM.

"Captain Basil Hall."

If it afforded so much pleasure to the First Lord of the Admiralty and others, who were merely the channels of communication through which the royal favour circulated from the throne to the most distinguished of its subjects, we may conceive the satisfaction with which our kind-hearted monarch himself exercised his power. And, probably, there never was an act of condescension more universally or more justly applauded throughout the country.

Had a similar fate befallen Shakspeare, and had his health in his latter years required the renovating aid of a sea voyage, with what gratitude would not all posterity have looked back to the kindness and sagacity of "good Queen Bess," had she, like our late gracious sovereign, anticipated the wishes of her subjects and their descendants, by placing a ship of war at the great poet's command! That the Author of Waverley will be viewed by our posterity, in no small degree, as we now view Shakspeare, there can be little doubt; and, probably, there will be handed down to future times no circumstance better calculated to afford lasting gratification, than the generous conduct of His Majesty upon this occasion. Well might the following lines of Lord Byron, forming part of his beautiful sonnet to George IV., be addressed to his successor:

"Dismiss thy guard, and trust thee to such straits!
For who would raise a hand except to bless?
Were it not easy, sir, and is't not sweet,
To make thyself beloved?"

Who can forget the sensation produced at the time, by the delicacy and good taste with which the interests and convenience of a private individual were thus gracefully converted into a public

concern? Every one, indeed, appeared really to feel as if a personal favour had been done to himself; and, certainly, no monarch ever gained more genuine popularity than was accorded to William IV., for this well-timed attention to the wishes of the country.

Sir Walter, from the first, had been very averse to any application being made from him to government, so that he was much relieved by understanding that the whole affair was the spontaneous and hearty act of the highest authorities, the instant it was suggested to them that his health might be benefited by the proposed change of air. At bottom, it is probable that this diffidence on his part arose more from his secret reluctance to root himself up from his house and home, his dearly beloved black-letter library, his musty papers, and his cherished plantations, in which he took infinitely more delight than in all the society and scenery of the rest of the world besides. If, indeed, he would have consented to desist from over-working his mind, and could have been prevailed upon to agree for a time to pass his days in rambling about the rising woods of Abbotsford, every tree of which was planted by himself, it would have been the most cruel thing imaginable to have sought to move him from home. But, in the fervour of his manly anxiety to fulfil his pecuniary engagements, he considered each hour misspent which did not directly contribute to the accomplishment of that noble end.

At last, this eager desire to work himself out of debt seemed to have become a sort of fascination which he could not resist. One day, Dr. Abercrombie, of Edinburgh (than whom none can more ably "minister to the mind diseased"), urged upon him the necessity of greater moderation in his mental labours.

"Sir Walter," said the kind physician, "you must not write so constantly; really, sir, you must not work."

"I tell you what it is, doctor," said the Author of Waverley, "Molly, when she puts the kettle on, might just as well say, 'Kettle—kettle, don't boil!'"

What the result might have proved had no change of residence taken place, it is perhaps idle now to consider. It is sufficient to know, that the reiterated and earnest recommendations of the ablest medical men in the country were fully acted upon; and that Sir Walter, with many a sigh, but, I suspect, no great hopes of amendment, set out from Abbotsford, and, after an easy journey, reached London.

As I had been in some degree the proximate cause of his coming to town, I instantly waited on him, and offered my services to accompany the party to Portsmouth to assist in the embarkation. A free passage, indeed, had been ordered; and I knew Captain (now Rear-Admiral Sir Hugh) Pigot of the Barham to be, of all the officers of the navy, one of the very best suited to do the honours to such a guest; yet experience had shown me, that on such occasions there are many little odds and ends relating to the outfit of passengers which cannot be fully understood by a perfect stranger to ship matters, but which minute details it was scarcely fair to expect the captain to attend to at the busiest of all busy moments, when preparing his ship for sea.

Sir Walter at first declined my offer, saying that he had already given me and all his other friends a great deal too much trouble. It was impossible to make him understand, that what might have been considered indifferent or even troublesome in any other case, must become a high honour as well as a pleasure in his. Nor do I think he would even at the last have accepted my services, had it not been for an accidental difficulty that arose in London, for the solution of which he called me in. Some friend who, with the best intentions, no doubt, must have been totally ignorant of the state of feeling in the Navy, had, it appears, suggested to Sir Walter the propriety of his making the captain of the ship some present at the end of the voyage.

"Now," said he, in some perplexity, "is this right? Is it usual in such cases? and, if so, what am I to give? It looks odd, I confess," he added, "but I wish to do all that is proper."

I of course informed him that such a thing was not only unusual and improper, but that the effect would inevitably be the very reverse of what was intended, and, so far from gratifying his host, would inevitably offend him. He looked mightily puzzled, and at last said,

"But may I not give the captain a copy of the Waverley Novels, for instance, with an autograph inscription?"

I assured him he might do this with great propriety and safety; but repeated my advice to him to keep clear of all such presents as a pipe of Madeira, or a hogshead of sherry, which had been suggested to him. This communication appeared to relieve him so much that, thinking I might again be useful to him, I took advantage of the opportunity to repeat my offer to accompany him to Portsmouth, adding, that I thought he ought to take me at my word, were it only to give convoy back again to those ladies of his family who did not accompany him further. This he accordingly agreed to, and on Sunday morning, the 23rd of October, 1831, the party left town, in as rainy, windy, and melancholy a day as ever was seen.

No particular adventures occurred on the way, except that at one of the stages, Guildford, I think, where a short halt was made, a blind horse, when turning suddenly into the stable-yard, pushed right against Sir Walter, threw him violently to the ground, and had well-nigh killed him on the spot! What a fate would this have been, had the Author of Waverley (perhaps the foremost man of all the world) been trodden to death by a decayed post-horse! And yet who shall say that, upon the whole, even such a catastrophe might not have proved a blessed exemption from much subsequent suffering and sorrow, at which the nations wept?

The mysterious influences of disease strike at the mind not less surely, though often more slowly, than those which destroy the body. Of this fatal progress, he was himself probably aware, for when he related this incident to me next morning, though his account was touched with his wonted humour, I saw, or almost fancied I saw, in his tone and manner, a trace of regret that he had escaped a swifter destruction than that which, I verily believe, he even then fully knew was darkly overtaking him.

In order to have all things ready for Sir Walter's

reception, I hastened forward to Portsmouth in the Rocket coach, and having found the principal inn, the George, quite full, engaged rooms for him at the Fountain. Mr. Nance, the landlord, and the other worthy folks there, who had little expected such an honour, were so enchanted that they prevailed on one whole family to turn out of their rooms, in order the better to accommodate Sir Walter's party.

Next morning, Captain Pigot waited on him, as he said, to receive orders, and to beg him to consider that every officer, man, and boy in the Barham, was solicitous, above all things, to render his passage agreeable. Sir Walter was much pleased with the frankness of these offers, but declared he knew nothing at all about a ship, and must trust to those of his friends who did. Upon which Captain Pigot asked the ladies if they would like to go on board the frigate to see the accommodations. But, as the weather was rather rough, this was declined, and I undertook the first visit on their account.

I found that on each side of the ship a most commodious set of cabins had been put up by order of the Admiralty. Although these apartments had been very handsomely furnished by Captain Pigot, and were nearly ready for the party, he begged me again and again to look over everything, and point out what was still wanted, stating that he would reckon it the greatest favour if I would consider him completely at Sir Walter's service. As, however, he was then exceedingly busy, he requested I would take every opportunity of discovering Sir Walter's wishes, and put them in train, without consulting him.

"This," said he, "will answer the same end, and perhaps it will even be more agreeable to my illustrious guest. Do, therefore, oblige me," continued this considerate and kind-hearted officer, "by finding out, either from himself or from the ladies of his family, anything and everything that will add to his comfort on the voyage, and let me know it; or if I be not in the way, apply to the first lieutenant, who will attend implicitly to all your suggestions. By the way, cannot you see anything now," said he, "to remark upon? Is there nothing in these arrangements which Sir Walter might find inconvenient?"

As Captain Pigot seemed so desirous that I should remark something to add or to alter, I cast my eyes about to discover defects where everything seemed perfect. At last, I said, "It strikes me that these little gratings which form the steps of your quarter-deck ladder will bother Sir Walter, who is so dependent upon his stick, that if the point of it goes into one of these holes, he may tumble down head-foremost on the main deck."

Captain Pigot merely turned to the first lieutenant and said, "Mr. Walker, will you attend to that?" But before I left the ship, and indeed almost before I could have supposed the planks planed, I found the gratings gone, and solid boards substituted in their stead.

It was the same with everything else, and a sort of magical celerity appeared to belong to the execution of Sir Walter's slightest wish, or supposition of a wish.

Many people may not be aware that there are certain things which it is usual for passengers to provide themselves with, even though ordered a free passage in a ship of war; such as beds, sheeting, and various other minor articles of furniture. These, with the captain's permission, I took care to send on board without troubling Sir Walter. When all was completed, Captain Pigot prevailed on the ladies to take a final survey of the accommodations, in order to discover whether, by possibility, anything had been omitted which seemed calculated to be useful or agreeable to them on their passage. The orders of the Admiralty, however, had been so precise; the dock-yard people had worked so well; and the captain and officers of the ship had taken so much pains with all the details; that not the smallest omission could be spied out. We had only, therefore, to corroborate the captain's report to Sir Walter, that all was ready for him to embark whenever the wind should shift.

While these things were going on afloat, every person on shore seemed to vie with his neighbour in doing honour to the illustrious stranger. The lieutenant-governor, Sir Colin Campbell, and the other local authorities, called upon him almost as if he had been a royal personage, to place at his disposal all the means in their power to render his stay at Portsmouth pleasant. The port-admiral, Sir Thomas Foley, waited on him to say, that his yacht, the Sylph, and the flag-ship's barge, were at his orders, should he or his family wish to sail about. The commissioner also, Sir Michael Seymour, offered his services, and begged to know if there was anything in the dock-yard which he wished to see.

"I am so weak myself," said Sir Walter, "that I cannot hope to visit your establishment; but I believe some of my family are anxious to see an anchor made."

Nothing more passed, but next day a message was received to say that a barge anchor was to be forged, if the ladies would name the hour.

The Lords of the Admiralty happened to be at Portsmouth on a tour of inspection, and they too waited upon Sir Walter to learn if anything further could be done to meet his wishes. An idea at that time prevailed that an armament was about to be fitted out against Holland, or, at all events, it was supposed the ships at Spithead and Plymouth might be called away to rendezvous at the Downs. When this news came, I remember thinking that I had detected a lurking sort of hope on Sir Walter's part, that the frigate prepared for his reception would be one of those ordered away, and that he might thus have an excuse for not leaving the country. To the measure of removing him from home, indeed, as far as I could see, he never gave his hearty concurrence, though he submitted to the positive dictation of his physicians, and the earnest entreaties of his friends. This glimpse of hope of an interruption to his banishment, as I heard him call it once, and only once, was demolished by a demi-official notification from the high authorities charged with the regulation of such affairs, who happened to be still present, that the Barham should not be diverted from her original destination except in the last extremity, for while there could be found another available ship in England, Sir Walter Scott might reckon on nothing interfering with his plans.

I observed a very slight shrug of the shoulders, and a transient expression of provocation in his

countenance, as this flattering message was delivered to him ; but it instantly passed off, and he expressed himself in the highest degree flattered by such attention. It is pleasing and instructive to recollect, that from the hour of this communication to the moment of his sailing, his spirits appeared to recover their wonted elasticity. The exil—so he had viewed the necessity of leaving home—was now inevitable, and he made up his mind to meet it ; though I am persuaded he had not the slightest hope of deriving any benefit from the voyage. I one day heard him mention how curious it was that two of our greatest novelists had gone abroad only to die—Fielding and Smollett. And the same evening he asked me to step over to Mr. Harrison the bookseller's to get for him Fielding's Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon. "That little book," said he, "the last he wrote, is one of the most entertaining and wittiest of all Fielding's productions, though written during a period of great pain and sickness. Indeed," he continued, "I hardly know any more amusing book of travels than Fielding has contrived to compose out of a subject apparently so scanty and threadbare as a voyage down the Thames, through the Downs to St. Helen's Roads, and then across the Bay of Biscay."

One day, speaking of the Knights of Malta, he begged me to send for a history of that island ; and as the waiter was going off to the bookseller's some one called out, "Tell Mr. Harrison to send over also any amusing works he has at hand."

"If we do not take care," said another, "they will send us a pile of the Waverley Novels."

"Ay!" cried out the Author himself, "that would be sending coals to Newcastle indeed!"

Nothing could be more good-natured than the manner in which he allowed himself to be made the lion. The Portsmouth Philosophical Society, feeling naturally desirous to enrol such a name on their list of members, wrote to request that honour. By some accident, however, the deputation charged with this communication arrived at the Fountain Inn when Sir Walter was in the middle of dinner.

"Shall I say that you will receive them by and by, sir?" I asked, "or to-morrow morning?"

"O no," said he, "they may feel disappointed—or perhaps they may have a meeting to-night—show them in, I pray."

In they came accordingly ; and as the opportunity was too good to be omitted of getting a sight of Sir Walter Scott, the deputation of philosophers was by no means a small one. He talked, however, to each of these gentlemen, appeared to take the greatest interest in the history of their town and its curiosities ; and having drank a glass of wine with them, and shaken hands with each, he dismissed them, enchanted with his urbanity and good-nature.

One day, when the ladies were setting out to return the visit of Lady and the Miss Seymours in the dock-yard, he said, "Some of you write my name on a card, and leave it with Sir Michael Seymour for me, as I cannot conveniently go so far. No—stay," cried he, with one of his sly looks of good humour at his own ingenuity, "give me the pen—I'll write it myself—the young ladies may wish to have it as an autograph."

Though Sir Walter walked but little, and with some difficulty, he appeared to have no objection to seeing company. The Fountain accordingly overflowed all day long. Every mortal that could by any means get an introduction, and some even without, paid their respects ; and during the last three days, when his spirits revived, he had something to say to every visitor. He declined seeing no one, and never showed anything but the most cordial good-will, even to those who came professedly to see the show. One day an old acquaintance of mine, a seaman of the name of Bailey, the admiral's messenger, after much humming and hawing, and excuse-making, asked whether it were possible for him to get a sight of Sir Walter Scott. "in order to hear him speak." Nothing, I told him, was more easy ; for when, as usual, he brought the letters from the post-office, he had only to send up word to say, that he wished to deliver them in person. Next morning, accordingly, the waiter said to me at the breakfast table, "Bailey, sir, says he must deliver Sir Walter's letters to himself, and that you told him so." Sir Walter looked towards me and laughed ; but when the honest fellow's wishes were explained, he desired him to be sent up, and, shaking hands with him, said, "I hope you are satisfied now you have heard me speak."

"I sent three men off yesterday, sir," said Bailey, "to enter for the Barham—all because you are going in her."

"They'll at all events find a good ship and a good captain, that I am very sure of," replied Sir Walter.

"That's something of a compliment certainly," he continued, when the door was shut ; "but I hold that the greatest honour yet which has been paid to my celebrity was by a fishmonger in London last week, who was applied to by the servant of the house in which I was living for some cod, I believe for dinner ; but it being rather late in the day, there was none left. On the servant's mentioning who it was wanted for, the fishmonger said that altered the matter, and that if a bit was to be had in London for love or money, it should be at my disposal. Accordingly, the man himself actually walked up with the fish all the way from Billingsgate to Sussex Place, in the Regent's Park. Now, if that is not substantial literary reputation, I know not what is!"

Sir Walter's health was such that he could take but little exercise. He complained chiefly of weakness in his legs ; but he managed generally once a day to walk for about half an hour on the ramparts between the platform and the south-east bastion, that on which the flag-staff is planted. He used generally to rise between six and seven, and then to come to the drawing-room, where he commenced writing his diary in a thick quarto book, bound in calf-skin. I took care always to be up and dressed before he left his room, ready to give him my arm, without which assistance he found it difficult at times to get along. I saw him once attempt to walk, without even his stick, from the breakfast-table to that on which his writing-desk stood ; but he made poor work of it, and I heard him say, as he crept along with more bitterness of tone than usually entered into his expressions, "It is hard enough (or odd enough) that I should now be just beginning again, at sixty years

of age, what I left off, after my severe illness at ten."

He said to me one morning, pointing to his MS. book, "Do you keep a diary? I suppose, of course, you have kept one all your life?" I mentioned what my practice had been in that respect, and added something about the difficulty of writing anything while engaged with the printer's devils.

"Ay! ay! that's true," he ejaculated, with a sigh—"too true. For I fear that a great part of my present illness has been brought on by too much working. Let me warn you, captain, it is a very dangerous thing to overwork."

He then began a conversation about his affairs; and upon my accidentally mentioning the name of his publisher, Mr. Robert Cadell of Edinburgh, he said, with another sigh, "Ah! if I had been in our excellent friend Cadell's hands during all the course of my writing for the public, I should now undoubtedly have been worth a couple of hundred thousand pounds, instead of having to work myself to pieces to get out of debt."

I ventured to remark, that but for the illness of which he spoke, it was perhaps all the better; for, ever since the period of his difficulties, he had been influenced by a more generous and disinterested motive for exertion than any which a mere wish to make money could supply.

"Perhaps so," he answered; "no writer should ever make money his sole object, or even his chief object. Money-making is not the proper business of a man of letters. Yet, on the other hand, the professed money-making gentlemen (my creditors I mean) must admit, that although I have been working in their line lately, it has been for their benefit not my own. In fact, as I said before, I think I have overdone the thing, and may have brought on some of this illness by excess of mental exertion. Where it will all end, I know not. I am giving myself a chance, I understand, by making this journey—and one can die anywhere."

"It occurs to me," I observed, "that people are apt to make too much fuss about the loss of fortune, which is one of the smallest of the great evils of life, and ought to be among the most tolerable."

"Do you call it a small misfortune to be ruined in money matters?" he asked.

"It is not so painful, at all events, as the loss of friends."

"I grant that," he said.

"As the loss of character?"

"True again."

"As the loss of health?"

"Ay, there you have me," he muttered to himself, in a tone so melancholy that I wished I had not spoken.

"What is the loss of fortune to the loss of peace of mind?" I continued.

"In short," said he, playfully, "you will make it out that there is no harm in a man's being plunged over head and ears in debt he cannot remove."

"Much depends, I think, on how it was incurred, and what efforts are made to redeem it—at least if the sufferer be a right-minded man."

"I hope it does," he said, cheerfully and firmly.

In order to give the subject a bend towards something less serious, I observed that I thought a whitlow on the tip of an author's fore-finger on the right hand (which was my case at the moment) was no small misfortune,

"Yes," remarked Sir Walter; "for it certainly is anything but an amusement to write with the left hand."

It may be interesting to persons engaged in literary pursuits to mention that, several years before the period of which I am now speaking, when Sir Walter Scott dined with me in Edinburgh, I took an opportunity of asking him how many hours a-day he could write for the press with effect.

"I reckon," he answered, "five hours and a half a-day as very good work for the mind, when it is engaged in original composition. I can very seldom reach six hours; and I suspect that what is written after five or six hours' hard mental labour is not worth much."

I asked him how he divided these hours.

"I try to get two or three of them before breakfast," he said, "and the remainder as soon after as may be, so as to leave the afternoon free to walk or ride, or read, or be idle."

This conversation, it is material to observe, took place in Edinburgh, before Sir Walter gave up his office as Clerk of Session, and his answers, I suspect, referred chiefly to those holiday portions of the year which he spent at Abbotsford when the court was not sitting. But, from something he said at the time, I was led to infer that he adopted the same limitations on his mental labours even when fixed in Edinburgh by the law courts. The duties of his office being of a light or mechanical nature, which required no great effort of thought, were probably not taken into the calculation.

But after he quitted the Court of Session, and was left completely free, I have reason to believe that his intense and chivalrous anxiety to disentangle himself from debts, which would have driven most other men to despair, led him greatly to exceed the judicious limits he formerly considered necessary, not only to his health, but, according to his own showing, to the good quality of his writings. I have even heard, that, latterly, with the same noble spirit, he sometimes actually worked for ten, twelve, and even fourteen hours a-day, instead of five or six! And from many expressions he let fall at Portsmouth, I am satisfied that he ascribed the demolition of his health mainly to this cause.

I have already mentioned, that during the last three days of his detention at Portsmouth by contrary winds, Sir Walter rallied, or plucked up as it is called, amazingly; looked and talked with cheerfulness, cracked his jokes, and told his old stories with almost as much brilliancy as I ever remember to have witnessed before. He began about that time also to speak of the voyage with interest, and his eye sparkled as in old times, when he mentioned the probability of his visiting the Pyramids of Egypt, and perhaps Athens and Constantinople. At such moments, and while he was sitting down, a stranger might have imagined there was nothing the matter with him; but when he rose, or attempted to rise, his weakness became distressingly manifest. One evening, after he had been chatting for an hour with the greatest vivacity, he expressed a wish to retire; but although I gave him my arm, and did all I could to assist

him, it was not till the third attempt that he gained his feet. While endeavouring to rise, he muttered, "This weakness increases on me, confound it!" And after a pause, he added, "It is rather hard, that just at the moment—at the very first moment of my whole life, that I could call myself free to go any where or do anything I pleased, I should be knocked up in this style, and prevented from even crossing the street, were the greatest curiosity in the world placed there."

Next morning, however, the 28th of October, when I was sitting in the drawing-room, about half-past six or seven o'clock, in he stepped stoutly enough; and waving his stick, he called to me to give him my arm, as the morning was fine, that he might take a walk on the ramparts. On reaching the platform, he turned round and said,

"Now show me the exact spot where Jack the Painter was hanged."

I pointed out the locality, now occupied by a post or pilot-beacon on the inner part of Blockhouse Point, on which I remembered having seen Jack's bones hanging in chains more than nine-and-twenty years before, when I first went to sea as a wee middy. He seemed so familiar with all Jack the Painter's exploits, and especially his setting fire to the dock-yard, that I asked if he had been reading about him lately. "Not for these last thirty or forty years, certainly," he answered.

As we strolled along the ramparts, he looked often towards Spithead, and at last he stopped, and desired me to show him where the celebrated Royal William used to lie during the war.

"Where did the Royal George go down?" he next asked.

I pointed out to him the buoy; upon which, as if taxing his memory, he murmured, in a voice scarcely audible, a line or so of Cowper's verses on that melancholy catastrophe:—

"His fingers held the pen, his sword"——

"No!" said he, correcting himself, "that won't do"—

"His sword was in its sheath—
His fingers held the pen,
When Kempenfelt went down
With twice four hundred men."

He was in great glee during the whole of this walk, and told some five or six of his best stories, and all in his very best manner. Most of these, indeed, I had heard before; but their dress was new, and their points were as sharp as ever. One, however, he told about himself, which I had not heard till then, though I think it has since been published in one of the volumes of the new edition of the Waverley Novels. At the age of two years, it seems, he was placed under the charge of a nursery-maid, and sent to his grand-uncle's in the country, for the benefit of his health, he being then in a very feeble and rickety state. "My ailments, however," he went on to relate, "were nearly being brought to a speedy conclusion, for my nurse, whose head appears to have been turned by some love craze or another, resolved to put me to death. In this view, she carried me to the moors, and having *laid* me on the heather, pulled out her scissors, and made the necessary preparations for cutting my throat."

"Well, sir," said I, astonished at the cool manner in which he described the process, "what deterred her?"

"I believe," replied he, "that the infant smiled in her face, and she could not go on."

"Would not this moment in the history of the Author of Waverley form a good subject for a picture?" said some one to whom I related the story, which question, by the way reminds me, that Sir Walter, most good-naturedly, allowed me one morning to make a set of camera lucida sketches of him standing, as he said, "with all his imperfections on his feet." My brother, Mr. James Hall, a young artist in London, having conceived the novel and bold idea of representing Sir Walter exactly as he appeared in company, without any of the contrivances by which other painters have studiously concealed the defect of his right foot, he begged me to secure some careful jottings with the camera for this purpose. I told Sir Walter the reason why I wished to sketch him, leg and all; at which he laughed repeatedly, and said his young friend's idea was not a bad one. While I was putting the apparatus in order, he said to himself, "I wonder what sort of a defect it was that old Æsop had?" I asked if his lameness had ever given him any inconvenience as a boy? "No, scarcely any," he replied; "I used to climb up and down all the most difficult parts of the Castle Rock of Edinburgh with any boy at the school."

Upon another occasion I heard him say, "An illness, when I was not above two years old, brought on this disagreeable lameness of mine," touching his foot with his stick as he spoke; "and I remember quite well, that there was an idea that I might be cured by having my whole body wrapped up in a raw sheep's skin. The unpleasant sensation caused by the contact of the skin, just taken from the animal's back and applied to my body, I shall never forget. I don't fancy it did me much good."

Immediately after breakfast, on the morning of the 29th of October, Captain Pigot landed from the Barham, to mention to Sir Walter Scott, that although the wind was not, strictly speaking, fair—inasmuch as it was a dead calm—yet he thought the opportunity should be taken to embark. Sir Walter was all compliance, and appeared, indeed, rejoiced to get away. "We have been kept here as prisoners at large during the last week, and I long to get into what you call blue water, Captain Pigot. Pray give my compliments to the commissioner, and say I shall feel obliged to him to send the barge which he offered, to take us on board."

But while he spoke, Mr. Gayton, the flag-lieutenant, came in with Admiral Sir Thomas Foley's compliments, to say, that, on his hearing that the Barham was ready, and that Captain Pigot had gone to announce that it was time to embark, the signal had been made to the Britannia to send her barge to convey Sir Walter Scott and his family to Spithead.

He himself was soon ready; but the rest of the party, who had trunks to pack, and other dispositions to make, necessarily took longer time. Meanwhile, the Author of Waverley sat in the drawing-room in the highest spirits I ever remember to have seen him—chatting with every one who came

in about his voyage, the beauty of the day, and the kindness of the King, the Admiralty, the admiral, the captain of his ship, and, in short, he exclaimed, laughing, "It is really quite ridiculous the fuss you are all making about one person." Ever and anon, as any one came into the room to pick up things, he was sure to fire off some good-humoured scold about the sin of tardiness, and the proverbial length of time it took to get ladies under-weigh, with their endless bonnets and band-boxes. No one of us escaped, indeed, male or female. But there ran through all his observations such an air of humour and drollery, mixed occasionally with a slight dash of caustic sarcasm, in the funny style of his own dear Antiquary, that the resemblance was at times complete. I never remember to have seen Sir Walter more cheerful, and even animated, than he was on the morning of his embarkation; and, in fact, there appeared so little trace of illness, that the hopes of his ultimate and full recovery seemed, for the hour, to rest on surer foundations than ever.

At a little after eleven in the forenoon he stepped into the barge at the Sally Port, and was rowed off to Spithead in a most beautiful morning. The surface of the sea appeared to have tranquillised itself for the occasion—for I scarcely ever before saw Spithead, even in summer, so smooth or so completely without swell. The whole surface of the immense anchorage lay as polished in appearance as the speculum of a telescope, while the only ripple visible in any direction was that which glanced far off to the right and left from the oars, and from the barge's cutwater, as she glided, with a faint hissing noise, faster than I remember to have known a boat rowed before. For the men, who seemed well aware of the honour done them, gave way together in such style, that their oars bent like bows, while Sir Walter pointed to the beauties of the Isle of Wight, looked long at Haslar Hospital, asked minutely about the pilotage round the different buoys on the shoals, and made us explain the distinction between the anchorages of St. Helen's, Spithead, and the Mother Bank. Nothing escaped him; and it was really quite satisfactory to see our venerable friend, at the hour of parting, apparently so light-hearted and contented.

On reaching the Barham, we found, that although an accommodation-ladder had been fitted, the officers, with the ready consideration of men of business, had slung an arm-chair, that Sir Walter might have the option of walking up or being hoisted in. He preferred the chair as less fatiguing; and as we adjusted the apparatus, I observed that a new and stouter rope than usual had been rove for the occasion. This precaution may have been accidental, but it was quite in keeping with the incessant and eager desire manifested by every person on board to do honour to their illustrious guest.

After he had looked over the cabins intended for his accommodation, with which he expressed himself very much pleased, he came again on deck, and sat abaft the mizen-mast in conversation with his family till it was time to take leave, as a breeze had sprung up, and the ship was getting quickly under weigh.

I shall not soon forget the great man's last look, while he held his friends successively by the hand, as he sat on the deck of the frigate, and wished us good-bye, one after another, in a tone which showed that he at least knew all hope was over!

During the week, when I was in attendance upon Sir Walter Scott at Portsmouth, I had frequent opportunities of speaking to him about his different novels, a subject upon which I was glad to find he had no objection to converse. I mentioned to him one day, that I considered myself very fortunate in having become the possessor of his original manuscript of the Antiquary. His observation was very remarkable. "I am glad of that, for it is the one I like best myself; and if you will let me have it for a few minutes, I shall be glad to write a word or two upon it to that effect."

I told him it was in town, but that I should write off for it express, and hoped to receive it in time. Meanwhile, I asked him one or two questions about the Antiquary, and begged to know if it had cost much trouble in the composition.

"None whatever," was his reply; "I wrote it 'currente calamo' from beginning to end."

I asked him if he had ever actually witnessed or known of any scene resembling that of the baronet and his daughter going round the headland, and nearly being swept away by the tide coming in?

"O no!" he said, rather impatiently, I thought as if the whole were obviously imaginative.

I next asked him if ever he had been present at such a scene as that in the hut of the fisherman, whose son is represented as lying dead in his coffin?

"No," he replied; "not exactly as there described; not exactly in all respects. I have, however, been in cottages upon similar occasions."

"Is Rab Tull, sir, the parish clerk, a real name; for, I observe at page 65 of the first volume of the MS. that this person's name was originally written Rab Dozend?"

"No," he said, "it is not a real name. Tull is a common name in that part of the country—Dundee."

He laughed when he repeated the word Dozend, but said he could not recollect why he had changed it to Tull. I did not like to tease him with further questions.

By the mail early next morning I received the precious MS., and having taken my station in the drawing room, an hour before the usual time of Sir Walter's appearance, in order to secure the fulfilment of his promise, I waited impatiently till he came in. I was delighted to see him looking hearty and cheerful, as if he had passed a good night; and, as soon as he had taken his station at the writing-desk, I placed the autograph manuscript of the Antiquary before him, and reminded him of his offer to state in it the reasons of his preference of that novel.

He at once took his pen, and, in the course of somewhat less than an hour, wrote the letter in the next page. When he had finished, I said,

"You would add great value to this writing, Sir Walter, if you would be so kind as to put your name to it." He instantly wrote his signature.

"The date also," I added, "would give it still further value."

"True," he replied; "I had forgotten that." And, resuming his pen, he wrote, "Portsmouth, 27th October, 1831."

The following is a copy, word for word, of this very curious document, which possesses a high degree of interest, not only from its being the very last thing he wrote on the shores of England, but from its containing a pleasing glimpse of that matchless vigour of thought, linked with bewitching playfulness of humour, which, in the opinion of many people, distinguish "The Antiquary" above all his other works.

"My dear Captain Hall,

"As the wind seems determinately inflexible, I cannot employ my spare time better than in making a remark or two on this novel, which, as you are kind enough to set an ideal value upon, will perhaps be enhanced in that respect, by receiving any trifling explanations and particulars, that among the numerous creatures of my imagination, the author has had a particular partiality for the Antiquary. It is one of the very few of my works of fiction which contains a portrait from life, and it is the likeness of a friend of my infancy, boyhood, and youth—a fact detected at the time by the acuteness of Mr. James Chalmers, solicitor-at-law in London. This gentleman, remarkable for the integrity of his conduct in business, and the modesty of his charges, had been an old friend and correspondent of my father's, in his more early and busy days; and he continued to take an interest in literary matters, to the end of a life prolonged beyond the ordinary limits. He took, accordingly, some trouble to discover the author; and when he read the Antiquary, told my friend, William Erskine, that he was now perfectly satisfied that Walter Scott, of whom personally he knew really nothing, was the author of these mysterious works of fiction; for, that the character of Jonathan Oldbuck of Monkbarns was drawn from the late George Constable of Wallace Craigie of Dundee, who dined, when in Edinburgh, twice or thrice with my father every week, and used to speak of my sayings and doings as a clever boy. I was extremely surprised at this detection, for I thought I had taken the utmost care to destroy every trace of personal resemblance. I had no reason to suspect that any one in London could have recollected my friend, who had been long dead, and lived in strict retirement during the last years of his life. I took an opportunity to inquire after the general recollection which survived of my old friend, on an occasion when I chanced to be 'o'er the water' as we say. His house was in ruins, his property feued for some commercial [purpose,] and I found him described less as a humourist—which was his real character—than as a miser and a misanthrope, qualities which merely tinged his character. I owed him much for the kindness with which he treated me. I remember particularly, when I resided for a time at Prestonpans with my aunt, Miss Janet Scott—one of those excellent persons who devote their ease and leisure to the care of some sick relation—George Constable chose to fix his residence—I have always thought from some sneaking kindness for my aunt, who, though not in the van of youth, had been a most beautiful woman. At least, we three walked together every day in the world, and the Antiquary was my familiar companion. He taught me to read and understand Shakspeare. He explained the field of battle of Prestonpans, of which he had witnessed the horrors from a safe distance. Many other books he read to us, and showed a great deal of dramatic humour. I have mentioned in the recent, or author's edition, but less particularly than I would wish you to know, the sort of preference which I gave, and still give, this work, is from its connexion with the early scenes of my life. And here am I seeking health at the expense of travel, just as was the case with me in my tenth year. Well! I am not the first who has ended life as he began, and is bound to remember with gratitude those who have been willing to assist him in his voyage, whether in youth or age, amongst whom I must include old George Constable and yourself—

"Walter Scott.

"Portsmouth,
27th October, 1831."

THE END.

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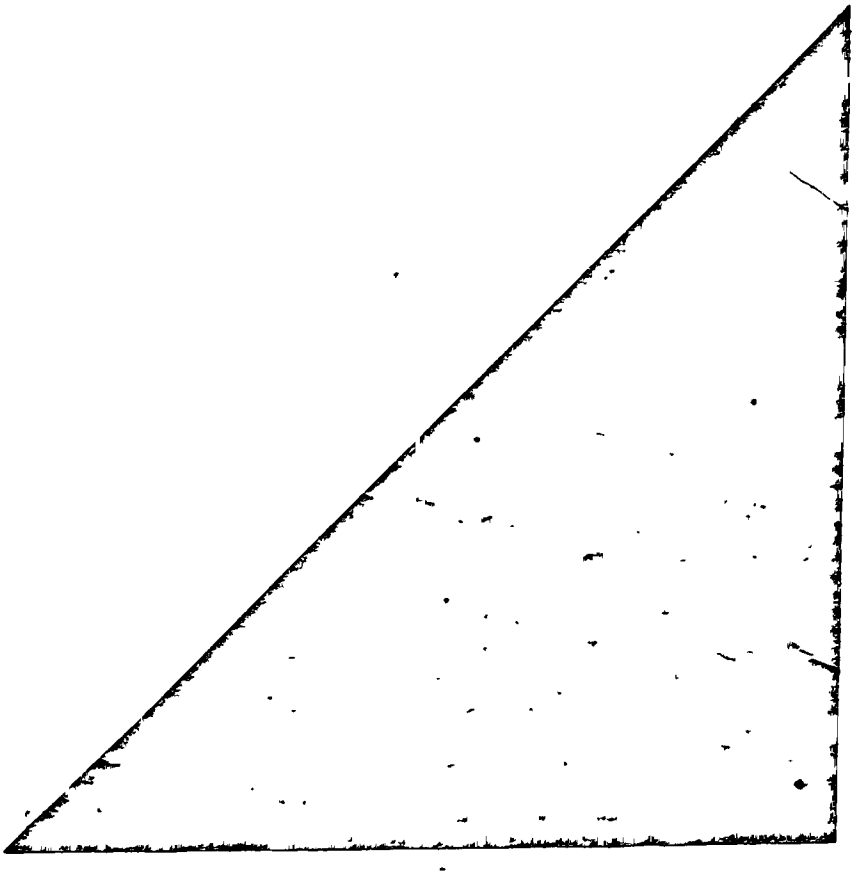

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